THE MAN-EATERS

AND

OTHER ODD PEOPLE.

A POPULAR DESCRIPTION OF

SINGULAR RACES OF MAN.

BY

CAPT. MAYNE REID,

AUTHOR OF "THE DESERT HOME," "THE BUSH-BOYS," ETC.

With Illustrations.

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WITH A MEMOIR BY R. H. STODDARD.

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I accept the terms offered, and hereby concede to you the exclusive right of publication, in the United States, of all my juvenile Tales of Adventure, known as Boys' Novels.

MAYNE REID.

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MEMOIR OF MAYNE REID.

No one who has written books for the young during the present century ever had so large a circle of readers as Captain Mayne Reid, or ever was so well fitted by circumstances to write the books by which he is chiefly known. His life, which was an adventurous one, was ripened with the experience of two Continents, and his temperament, which was an ardent one, reflected the traits of two races. Irish by birth, he was American in his sympathies with the people of the New World, whose acquaintance he made at an early period, among whom he lived for years, and whose battles he helped to win. He was probably more familiar with the Southern and Western portion of the United States forty years ago than any native-born American of that time. A curious interest attaches to the life of Captain Reid, but it is not of the kind that casual biographers dwell upon. If he had written it himself it would have charmed thousands of readers, who can now merely imagine what it might have been from the glimpses of it which they obtain in his writings. It was not passed in the fierce light of publicity, but in that simple, silent obscurity which is the lot of most men, and is their happiness, if they only knew it.

Briefly related, the life of Captain Reid was as follows: He was born in 1818, in the north of Ireland, the son of a Presbyterian clergyman, who was a type of the class which Goldsmith has described so freshly in the "Deserted Village," and was highly thought of for his labors among the poor of his neighborhood. An earnest, reverent man, to whom his calling was indeed a sacred one, he designed his son Mayne for the ministry, in the hope, no doubt, that he would be his successor. But nature had something to say about that, as well as his good father. He began to study for the ministry, but it was not long before

he was drawn in another direction. Always a great reader, his favorite books were descriptions of travel in foreign lands, particularly those which dealt with the scenery, the people, and the resources of America. The spell which these exercised over his imagination, joined to a love of adventure which was inherent in his temperament, and inherited, perhaps with his race, determined his career. At the age of twenty he closed his theological tomes, and girding up his loins with a stout heart he sailed from the shores of the Old World for the New. Following the spirit in his feet he landed at New Orleans, which was probably a more promising field for a young man of his talents than any Northern city, and was speedily engaged in business. The nature of this business is not stated, further than it was that of a trader; but whatever it was it obliged this young Irishman to make long journeys into the interior of the country, which was almost a *terra incognita*. Sparsely settled, where settled at all, it was still clothed in primeval verdure—here in the endless reach of savannas, there in the depth of pathless woods, and far away to the North and the West in those monotonous ocean-like levels of land for which the speech of England has no name—the Prairies. Its population was nomadic, not to say barbaric, consisting of tribes of Indians whose hunting grounds from time immemorial the region was; hunters and trappers, who had turned their backs upon civilization for the free, wild life of nature; men of doubtful or dangerous antecedents, who had found it convenient to leave their country for their country's good; and scattered about hardy pioneer communities from Eastern States, advancing waves of the great sea of emigration which is still drawing the course of empire westward. Travelling in a country like this, and among people like these, Mayne Reid passed five years of his early manhood. He was at home wherever he went, and never more so than when among the Indians of the Red River territory, with whom he spent several months, learning their language, studying their customs, and enjoying the wild and beautiful scenery of their camping grounds. Indian for the time, he lived in their lodges, rode with them, hunted with them, and night after night sat by their blazing camp-fires listening to the warlike stories of the braves and the quaint legends of the medicine men. There was that in the blood of Mayne Reid which fitted him to lead this life at this time, and whether he knew it or not it

educated his genius as no other life could have done. It familiarized him with a large extent of country in the South and West; it introduced him to men and manners which existed nowhere else; and it revealed to him the secrets of Indian life and character.

There was another side, however, to Mayne Reid than that we have touched upon, and this, at the end of five years, drew him back to the average life of his kind. We find him next in Philadelphia, where he began to contribute stories and sketches of travel to the newspapers and magazines. Philadelphia was then the most literate city in the United States, the one in which a clever writer was at once encouraged and rewarded. Frank and warm-hearted, he made many friends there among journalists and authors. One of these friends was Edgar Allan Poe, whom he often visited at his home in Spring Garden, and concerning whom years after, when he was dead, he wrote with loving tenderness.

The next episode in the career of Mayne Reid was not what one would expect from a man of letters, though it was just what might have been expected from a man of his temperament and antecedents. It grew out of the time, which was warlike, and it drove him into the army with which the United States speedily crushed the forces of the sister Republic—Mexico. He obtained a commission, and served throughout the war with great bravery and distinction. This stormy episode ended with a severe wound, which he received in storming the heights of Chapultepec—a terrible battle which practically ended the war.

A second episode of a similar character, but with a more fortunate conclusion, occurred about four years later. It grew out of another war, which, happily for us, was not on our borders, but in the heart of Europe, where the Hungarian race had risen in insurrection against the hated power of Austria. Their desperate valor in the face of tremendous odds excited the sympathy of the American people, and fired the heart of Captain Mayne Reid, who buckled on his sword once more, and sailed from New York with a body of volunteers to aid the Hungarians in their struggles for independence. They were too late, for hardly had they reached Paris before they learned that all was over: Görgey had surrendered at Arad, and Hungary was crushed. They were at once dismissed, and Captain Reid betook himself to London.

The life of the Mayne Reid in whom we are most interested—Mayne Reid, the author—began at this time, when he was in his thirty-first year, and ended only on the day of his death, October 21, 1883. It covered one-third of a century, and was, when compared with that which had preceded it, uneventful, if not devoid of incident. There is not much that needs be told—not much, indeed, that can be told—in the life of a man of letters like Captain Mayne Reid. It is written in his books. Mayne Reid was one of the best known authors of his time—differing in this from many authors who are popular without being known—and in the walk of fiction which he discovered for himself he is an acknowledged master. His reputation did not depend upon the admiration of the millions of young people who read his books, but upon the judgment of mature critics, to whom his delineations of adventurous life were literature of no common order. His reputation as a story-teller was widely recognized on the Continent, where he was accepted as an authority in regard to the customs of the pioneers and the guerilla warfare of the Indian tribes, and was warmly praised for his freshness, his novelty, and his hardy originality. The people of France and Germany delighted in this soldier-writer. "There was not a word in his books which a school-boy could not safely read aloud to his mother and sisters." So says a late English critic, to which another adds, that if he has somewhat gone out of fashion of late years, the more's the pity for the school-boy of the period. What Defoe is in Robinson Crusoe—realistic idyl of island solitude—that, in his romantic stories of wilderness life, is his great scholar, Captain Mayne Reid.

R. H. STODDARD.

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THE MAN-EATERS OF THE FEEGEE ISLANDS.

HAVE I a reader who has not heard of the "King of the Cannibal Islands?" I think I may take it for granted that there is not one in my large circle of boy-readers who has not heard of that royal anthropophagist, that "mighty king" who, —

> "in one hut,
> Had fifty wives as black as *sut*,
> And fifty of a double smut —
> That King of the Cannibal Islands."

And yet, strange as it may appear, the old song was no exaggeration — neither as regards the number of his wives, nor any other particular relating to King "Musty-fusty-shang." On the contrary, it presents a picture of the life and habits of his polygamous majesty that is, alas! too ludicrously like the truth.

Though the king of the Cannibal Islands has been long known by reputation, people never had any very definite idea in what quarter of the world his majesty's dominions lay. Being, as the name implies, an island-kingdom, it was to be looked for of course, in some part of the ocean; and the Pacific Ocean or Great South

Sea was generally regarded as that in which it was situated; but whether it was the Tonga Islands, or the Marquesas, or the Loo-Choos, or the Soo-loos — or some other group, that was entitled to the distinction of being the man-eating community, with the man-eating king at their head — was not very distinctly ascertained up to a recent period. On this head there is uncertainty no longer. Though in several groups of South-Sea Islands the horrible propensity is known to exist, yet the man-eaters, *par excellence*, the real *bona-fide* followers of the habit, are the *Feegees*. Beyond doubt these are the greatest cannibals in all creation, their islands the true "Cannibal Islands," and their king no other than "Musty-fusty-shang" himself.

Alas! the subject is too serious to jest upon, and it is not without pain that we employ our pen upon it. The truth must needs be told; and there is no reason why the world should not know how desperately wicked men may become under the influence of a despotism that leaves the masses in the power of the irresponsible few, with no law, either moral or physical, to restrain their unbridled passions.

You will find the Feegee Islands, in the Pacific Ocean, in the latitude of 18° south. This parallel passes nearly through the centre of the group. Their longitude is remarkable: it is the complement of the meridian of Greenwich — the line 180°. Therefore, when it is noon in London, it is midnight among the Feegees. Take the intersection of these two lines, 18° latitude and 180° longitude as a centre; describe an imaginary circle, with a diameter of 300 miles; its circumference, with the slight exception of a small outly-

ing group, will enclose, in a "ring fence," as it were, the whole Feegee archipelago.

The group numbers, in all, no fewer than 225 islands and islets, of which between 80 and 90 are at present inhabited — the whole population being not much under 200,000. The estimates of writers differ widely on this point; some state 150,000 — others, more than double this amount. There is reason to believe that 150,000 is too low. Say, then, 200,000; since the old adage: "In medias res," is generally true.

Only two of the islands are large, — "Viti," and "Vanua." Viti is 90 miles long, by 50 in breadth, and Vanua 100 by 25. Some are what are known as "coral islands;" others are "volcanic," presenting all varieties of mountain aspect, rugged and sublime. A few of the mountain-peaks attain the elevation of 5,000 feet above sea-level, and every form is known — table-topped, dome-shaped, needle, and conical. In fact, no group in the Pacific affords so many varieties of form and aspect, as are to be observed in the Feegee archipelago. In sailing through these islands, the most lovely landscapes open out before the eye, the most picturesque groupings of rocks, ridges, and mountain-peaks, ravines filled with luxuriant vegetation, valleys covered with soft verdure, so divinely fair as to appear the abode of angelic beings. "So beautiful was their aspect," writes one who visited them, "that I could scarcely bring my mind to the realizing sense of the well-known fact, that they were the abode of a savage, ferocious, and treacherous race of cannibals." Such, alas! is the fact, well known, as the writer observes.

Perhaps to no part of the world has Nature been

more bountiful than to the Feegee Islands. She has here poured out her favors in very profusion; and the *cornucopiæ* might be regarded as an emblem of the land. The richest products of a tropic vegetation flourish in an abundance elsewhere unknown, and the growth of valuable articles of food is almost spontaneous. Many kinds are really of spontaneous production; and those under cultivation are almost endless in numbers and variety. Yams grow to the length of six feet, weighing one hundred pounds each! and several varieties are cultivated. The sweet potato reaches the weight of five or six pounds, and the "taro" (*Arum esculentum*) also produces a root of enormous size, which forms the staple article of the Feegeean's food. Still another great tuber, weighing twenty or thirty pounds, and used as a liquorice, is the produce of the "massawe," or ti-tree (*dracæna terminalis*); and the root of the *piper methisticum* often attains the weight of one hundred and forty pounds! This last is possessed of highly narcotic properties; and is the material universally used in the distillation, or rather brewing, of the native drink called "yaqona" — the "kava" of the South-Sea voyagers. Bread-fruit grows in abundance: there being no less than nine varieties of this celebrated tree upon the different islands of the group, each producing a distinct kind of fruit; and what is equally remarkable, of the *musaceæ* — the plantain and banana — there are in the Feegee isles thirty different kinds, either of spontaneous growth, or cultivated! All these are well distinguished from one another, and bear distinct appellations. Three kinds of cocoa-palm add to the extraordinary variety of vege

table food, as well as to the picturesqueness of the scenery; but there is no lack of lovely forms in the vegetation, where the beautiful ti-tree grows, — where the fern and the screw-pines flourish, — where plantains and bananas unfold their broad bright leaves to the sun; where *arums* spread their huge fronds mingling with the thick succulent blades of the bromelia, and where pawpaws, shaddocks, orange and lime-trees exhibit every hue of foliage, from deep green to the most brilliant golden.

Fruits of a hundred species are grown in the greatest plenty; the orange and the Papuan apple, the shaddock and lemon; in short, almost every species of fruit that will flourish in a tropical clime. In addition, many indigenous and valuable kinds, both of roots and fruits, are peculiar to the Feegee group, yet unknown and uncultivated in any other part of the world. Even the very cloth of the country — and a beautiful fabric it makes — is the product of an indigenous tree, the "malo" or paper-mulberry (*Brousonetia papyrifera*), the "tapa" of voyagers. Not only the material for dresses, but the tapestry for the adornment of their temples, the curtains and hangings of their houses, are all obtained from this valuable tree.

We have not space for a more detailed account of the productions of these isles. It would fill a volume to describe with any degree of minuteness the various genera and species of its plants alone. Enough has been said to show how bountiful, or rather how prodigal, nature has been to the islands of the Feegeean Archipelago.

Of the animal kingdom there is not much to be said

Of quadrupeds there is the usual paucity of species that is noticed everywhere throughout the Polynesian islands. Dogs and pigs are kept; the latter in considerable numbers, as the flesh forms an important article of food; but they are not indigenous to the Feegee group, though the period of their introduction is unknown. Two or three small rodents are the only quadrupeds yet known to be true natives of the soil. Reptiles are alike scarce in species, — though the turtle is common upon the coasts, and its fishery forms the regular occupation of a particular class of the inhabitants. The species of birds are more numerous, and there are parrots, peculiar to the islands, of rich and beautiful plumage.

But we are not allowed to dwell upon these subjects. Interesting as may be the zoölogy and botany of the Feegeean Archipelago, both sink into insignificance when brought into comparison with its ethnology, — the natural history of its human inhabitants; — a subject of deep, but alas! of a terribly painful interest. By inquiry into the condition and character of these people, we shall see how little they have deserved the favors which nature has so bounteously bestowed upon them.

In the portrait of the Feegeean you will expect something frightfully hideous, — knowing, as you already do, that he is an eater of human flesh, — a man of gigantic stature, swarthy skin, bloodshot eyes, gaunt, bony jaws, and terrific aspect. You will expect this man to be described as being naked, — or only with the skin of a wild beast upon his shoulders, — building no house, manufacturing no household or other utensils, and armed with a huge knotted club, which he is ever ready to use: — a man who dwells in a cavern, sleeps indifferently in

the open air or under the shelter of a bush ; in short, a true savage. That is the sort of creature you expect me to describe, and I confess that just such a physical aspect — just such a condition of personal hideousness — would be exactly in keeping with the moral deformity of the Feegeean. You would furthermore expect this savage to be almost devoid of intellectual power, — altogether wanting in moral sense, — without knowledge of right and wrong, — without knowledge of any kind, — without ideas. It seems but natural you should look for such characteristics in a *cannibal.*

The portrait I am about to paint will disappoint you. I do not regret it, since it enables me to bring forward another testimony that man in his original nature is not a being of such desperate wickedness. That simple and primitive state, which men glibly call *savage*, is *not* the condition favorable to cannibalism. I know that it is to such people that the habit is usually ascribed, but quite erroneously. The Andaman islander has been blamed with it simply becauses he chances to go naked, and looks, as he is, hungry and emaciated. The charge is proved false. The Bushman of South Africa has enjoyed a similar reputation. It also turns out to be a libel. The Carib long lived under the imputation, simply because he presented a fierce front to the Spanish tyrant, who would have enslaved him ; and we have heard the same stigma cast upon a dozen other tribes, the *lowest savages* being usually selected ; in other words, those whose condition appeared the most wretched. In such cases the accusation has ever been found, upon investigation, to be erroneous.

In the most primitive state in which man appears

upon the earth, he is either without social organization altogether, or if any do exist, it is either patriarchal or republican. Neither of these conditions is favorable to the development of vice, — much less the most horrible of all vices.

It will not do to quote the character of the Bushman, or certain other of the low tribes, to refute this statement. These are not men in their primitive state ascending upward, but a condition altogether the reverse. They are the decaying remnants of some corrupt civilization, sinking back into the dust out of which they were created.

No — and I am happy to say it — man, as he originally came from the hands of the Creator, has no such horrid propensity as cannibalism. In his primitive state he has never been known to practise it, — except when the motives have been such as have equally tempted men professing the highest civilization, — but this cannot be considered cannibalism. Where that exists in its true unmitigated form, — and unhappily it does so, — the early stages of social organization must have been passed; the republican and patriarchal forms must both have given place to the absolute and monarchical. This condition of things is absolutely necessary, before man can obtain sufficient power to prey upon his fellow-man to the extent of eating him. There can be no "cannibal" without a "king."

So far from the Feegeean cannibals being *savages*, according to the ordinary acceptation of the term, they are in reality the very reverse. If we adhere to the usual meaning of the word civilization, understanding by it a people possessing an intelligent knowledge of arts, living

in well-built houses, fabricating fine goods, tilling their lands in a scientific and successful manner, practising the little politenesses and accomplishments of social life, — if these be the *criteria* of civilization, then it is no more than the truth to say that the standard possessed by the Feegee islanders is incomparably above that of the lower orders of most European nations.

It is startling to reflect — startling as sad — that a people possessed of such intellectual power, and who have ever exercised it to a wonderful extent, in arts, manufactures, and even in the accomplishing of their own persons, should at the same time exhibit moral traits of such an opposite character. An atrocious cruelty, — an instinct for oppression, brutal and ferocious, — a heart pitiless as that of the fiend himself, — a hand ever ready to strike the murderous blow, even though the victim be a brother, — lips that lie in every word they speak, — a tongue ever bent on barbaric boasting, — a bosom that beats only with sentiments of treachery and abject cowardice, — these are the revolting characteristics of the Feegeean. Dark as is his skin, his soul is many shades darker.

It is time, however, to descend to a more particular delineation of this man-eating monster; and first, we shall give a description of his personal appearance.

The Feegeeans are above the average height of Europeans or white men: men of six feet are common among them, though few reach the height of six feet six. Corpulent persons are not common, though large and muscular men abound. Their figure corresponds more nearly to that of the white man than any other race known. The proportions of their limbs resemble those

f northern Europeans, though some are narrower across the loins. Their chests are broad and sinewy, and their stout limbs and short, well-set necks are conspicuous characters. The outline of the face is a good oval; the mouth large, with white teeth regularly arranged — ah! those horrid teeth! — the nose is well-shaped, with full nostrils; yet quite distinct, as are the lips also, from the type of the African negro. Indeed, with the exception of their color, they bear very little resemblance to the negro, — that is, the thick-lipped, flat-nosed negro of our fancy; for there are negro tribes in Africa whose features are as fine as those of the Feegeeans, or even as our own. In color of skin the Feegeean is nearly, if not quite, as dark as the negro; but it may be remarked that there are different shades, as there are also among pure Ethiopians. In the Feegee group there are many men of mulatto color, but these are not of the original Feegee stock. They are either a mixed offspring with the Tonga islander, or pure-bred Tonga islanders themselves who for the past two hundred years have been insinuating themselves into the social compact of the Feegeeans. These light-colored people are mostly found on the eastern or windward side of the Feegee group, — that is, the side towards Tonga itself, — and the trade-winds will account for their immigration, which was at first purely accidental. They at present play a conspicuous part in the affairs of the Feegeeans, being in favor with the kings and great chiefs, partly on account of their being better sailors than the native Feegeeans, and partly on account of other services which these tyrants require them to perform. In some arts the Tongans are superior to the Feegeeans, but not in all. In pottery, wood-carving,

making of mats or baskets, and the manufacture of the tapa cloth, the Feegeeans stand unrivalled over all the Pacific Ocean.

We need say no more of the Tongans here; they are elsewhere described. Those dwelling in Feegee are not all fixed there for life. Some are so, and these are called Tonga-Feegeeans; the others are only visitors, giving their services temporarily to the Feegeean chiefs, or occupied in ship-building, — in constructing those great war canoes that have been the astonishment of South-Sea voyagers, and which Feegee sends forth from her dock-yards in the greatest perfection. These, when finished by the Tongan strangers, are used to carry them back to their own islands, that lie about three hundred miles to the windward (southeast).

But to continue the portrait of the Feegeean. We have touched almost every part of it except the hair; but this requires a most elaborate limning, such as the owner himself gives it. In its natural state the head of the Feegeean is covered by a mass of black hair long, frizzled, and bushy, sometimes encroaching on the forehead, and joined by whiskers to a thick, round, or pointed beard, to which mustaches are often added. Black is, of course, the natural color of the hair, but it is not always worn of this hue. Other colors are thought more becoming; and the hair, both of the men and women, is dyed in a variety of ways, lime burning it to a redish or whity-brown shade. A turmeric-yellow, or even a vermilion-red are not uncommon colors but all these keep varying, according to the change of fashions at court!

Commodore Wilkes, who has given a good deal of

his time to an exploration of the Feegee Islands, states that the Feegee hair, in its natural condition, is straight, and not "frizzled," as described above — he says that the frizzling is the work of the barber; but the Commodore is altogether mistaken in this idea. Thousands of Feegeans, whose hair was never touched by a barber, nor dressed even by themselves, exhibit this peculiarity. We regret to add that this is only one of a thousand erroneous statements which the Commodore has made during his gigantic exploration. He may have been excellent at his own speciality of making soundings and laying down charts; but on all matters pertaining to natural history or ethnology, the worthy Commodore appears to have been purblind, and, indeed, his extensive staff of naturalists of every kind have produced far less than might have been expected from such excellent opportunities as they enjoyed. The observations of the Commodore will not stand the test of time, and cannot be depended upon as safe guides, excepting in those cases where he was an actual eye-witness. About his truthful intentions there can be no doubt whatever.

Of one very peculiar performance among the Feegees he appears to have had actual demonstration, and as he has described this with sufficient minuteness, we shall copy his account; though, after what we have said, we should apologize largely for the liberty. The performance referred to is that of "barberizing" a barbarian monarch, and may be taken as a proof of high civilization among the Feegees. It will be seen that, with the exception of the tabooed fingers, there is not much difference between a barber of Bond

Street and an artist of like calling in the Cannibal Islands.

"The chiefs in particular," writes Commodore Wilkes, "pay great attention to the dressing of their heads, and for this purpose all of them have barbers, whose sole occupation is the care of their masters' heads. These barbers are called *a-vu-ni-ulu*. They are attached to the household of the chiefs in numbers of from two to a dozen. The duty is held to be of so sacred a nature, that their hands are tabooed from all other employment, and they are not even permitted to feed themselves. To dress the head of a chief requires several hours. The hair is made to spread out from the head, on every side, to a distance that is often eight inches. The beard, which is also carefully nursed, often reaches the breast, and when a Feegeean has these important parts of his person well dressed, he exhibits a degree of conceit that is not a little amusing.

"In the process of dressing the hair it is well anointed with oil, mixed with a carbonaceous black, until it is completely saturated. The barber then takes the hair-pin, which is a long and slender rod, made of tortoise-shell or bone, and proceeds to twitch almost every separate hair. This causes it to frizzle and stand erect. The bush of hair is then trimmed smooth by singeing it, until it has the appearance of an immense wig. When this has been finished, a piece of tapa, so fine as to resemble tissue-paper, is wound in light folds around it, to protect the hair from the dew or dust. This covering, which has the look of a turban, is called *tala*, and none but the chiefs are allowed to wear it any attempt to assume this head-dress by a *kai-si*, or

common person, would be immediately punished with death. The sala, when taken proper care of, will last three weeks or a month, and the hair is not dressed except when it is removed; but the high chiefs and dandies seldom allow a day to pass without changing the sala and having the hair put in order."

With this account, we conclude our description of the Feegeean's person. His costume is of the simplest kind, and easily described. With the men it is merely a strip of "tapa" or "malo" cloth passed several times round the waist, and the ends left to hang down in front. The length of the hanging ends determines the rank of the wearer, and only in the case of kings or great chiefs are they allowed to touch the ground. A turban of the finest tapa cloth among the great mop of hair is another badge of rank, worn only by kings and chiefs; and this head-dress, which adds greatly to the dignified appearance of the wearer, is not always coiffed in the same fashion, but each chief adapts it to his own or the prevailing taste of the court. The dress of the women is a mere waist-belt, with a fringe from six to ten inches in length. It is worn longer after they have become wives, sometimes reaching near the knee, and forming a very picturesque garment. It is called the "liku," and many of them are manufactured with surprising skill and neatness, the material being obtained from various climbing plants of the forest. Under the "liku" the women are tattooed, and there only. Their men, on the contrary, do not undergo the tattoo; but on grand occasions paint their faces and bodies in the most fanciful colors and patterns.

The kings and some chiefs suspend from their necks

shell ornaments — often as large as a dining-plate — that hang down upon the breast. Some, instead of this, wear a necklace of whales' teeth, carved to resemble claws, and bearing a very close resemblance to the necklaces of the Prairie Indians, made of the claws of the grizzly bear. Another kind of necklace — perhaps more appropriate to the Feegee — is a string of human teeth; and this kind is not unfrequently worn by these ferocious dandies.

It must not be supposed that the scantiness of the Feegeean costume arises from poverty or stinginess on the part of the wearer. Nothing of the kind. It is simply because such is the fashion of the time. Were it otherwise, he could easily supply the materials, but he does not wish it otherwise. His climate is an eternal summer, and he has no need to encumber his body with extraneous clothing. With the exception of the turban upon his head, his king is as naked as himself.

You may suppose that the Feegeans have but little notions of modesty; but, strange as it may appear, this is in reality not one of their failings. They regard the "malo" and "liku" as the most modest of garments; and a man or woman seen in the streets without these scanty coverings would be in danger of being clubbed to death!

It must be acknowledged that they are not *altogether* depraved — for in this respect they present the most astounding anomaly. Certain virtues are ascribed to them, and as I have painted only the dark side of their character, it is but fair to give the other. Indeed, it is a pleasure to do this — though there is not enough of the favorable to make any great alteration in the pic-

ture. The whole character is so well described by one of the most acute observers who has yet visited the South Seas — the Wesleyan missionary Williams — that we borrow the description.

"The aspect of the Feegeean," says Mr. Williams, "with reference to his mental character, so far from supporting the decision which would thrust him almost out of mankind, presents many points of great interest, showing that, if an ordinary amount of attention were bestowed on him, he would take no mean rank in the human family, to which, hitherto, he has been a disgrace. Dull, barren stupidity forms no part of his character. His feelings are acute, but not lasting; his emotions easily roused, but transient; he can love truly, and hate deeply; he can sympathize with thorough sincerity, and feign with consummate skill; his fidelity and loyalty are strong and enduring, while his revenge never dies, but waits to avail itself of circumstances, or of the blackest treachery, to accomplish its purpose. His senses are keen, and so well employed, that he often excels the white man in ordinary things. Tact has been called 'ready cash,' and of this the native of Feegee has a full share, enabling him to surmount at once many difficulties, and accomplish many tasks, that would have 'fixed' an Englishman. Tools, cord, or packing materials, he finds directly, where the white man would be at a loss for either; and nature seems to him but a general store for his use, where the article he wants is always within reach.

"In social diplomacy the Feegeean is very cautious and clever. That he ever paid a visit merely *en passant*, is hard to be believed. If no request leaves his lips, he

has brought the desire, and only waits for a good chance to present it now, or prepare the way for its favorable reception at some other time. His face and voice are all pleasantness; and he has the rare skill of finding out just the subject on which you most like to talk, or sees at once whether you desire silence. Rarely will he fail to read your countenance; and the case must be urgent indeed which obliges him to ask a favor when he sees a frown The more important he feels his business the more earnestly he protests that he has none at all; and the subject uppermost in his thoughts comes last to his lips, or is not even named; for he will make a second, or even a third visit, rather than risk a failure through precipitancy. He seems to read other men by intuition, especially where selfishness or lust are prominent traits. If it serves his purpose, he will study difficult and peculiar characters, reserving the results for future use; if afterwards he wish to please them, he will know how, and if to annoy them, it will be done most exactly.

"His sense of hearing is acute, and by a stroke of his nail he judges the ripeness of fruits, or soundness of various substances."

From what source the Feegeean has sprung is purely a matter of conjecture. He has no history, — not even a tradition of when his ancestors first peopled the Archipelago in which we now find him. Of his race we have not a much clearer knowledge. Speculation places him in the same family as the "Papuan Negro," and he has some points of resemblance to this race, in the color and frizzled hair; but there is as much difference between the wretched native of West Australia and the finely-developed Feegeean as there is between the stunted Laplander

and the stalwart Norwegian; nor is the coarse rough skin of the true Papuan to be recognized in the smooth, glossy epidermis of the Feegee Islander. This, however, may be the result of better living; and certainly among the mountain-tribes of the Feegees, who lead lives of greater privation and hardship, the approach to the Papuan appearance is observable. It is hardly necessary to add that the Feegeean is of a race quite distinct from that known as the Polynesian or South-Sea Islander. This last is different not only in form, complexion, and language, but also in many important mental characteristics. It is to this race the Tongans belong, and its pecularities will be sketched in treating of that people.

Were we to enter upon a minute description of the manners and customs of the Fegees, — of their mode of house and canoe building, — of their arts and manufactures, for they possess both, — of their implements of agriculture and domestic use, — of their weapons of war, — their ceremonies of religion and court etiquette, — our task would require more space than is here allotted to us: it would in fact be as much as to describe the complete social economy of a civilized nation; and a whole volume would scarce suffice to contain such a description. In a sketch like the present, the account of these people requires to be given in the most condensed and synoptical form, and only those points can be touched upor that may appear of the greatest interest.

It must be remembered that the civilization of the Feegees — of course, I allude to their proficiency in the industrial arts — is entirely an indigenous growth. They have borrowed ideas from the Tongans, — as the Tongans have also from them, — but both are native

productions of the South Sea, and not derived from any of the so-called great *centres* of civilization. Such as have sprung from these sources are of modern date, and make but a small feature in the panorama of Feegeean life. The houses they build are substantial, and suitable to their necessities. We cannot stay to note the architecture minutely. The private dwellings are usually about twenty-five feet long by fifteen in breadth, the interior forming one room, but with a sort of elevated divan at the end, sometimes screened with beautiful "tapa" curtains, and serving as the dormitory.

The ground-plan of the house is that of an oblong square, — or, to speak more properly, a parallelogram. The walls are constructed of timber, — being straight posts of cocoa-palm, tree-fern, bamboo, or bread-fruit, — the spaces between closely warped or otherwise filled in with reeds of cane or *calamus*. The thatch is of the leaves of the wild or cultivated sugar-cane, — sometimes of a *pandanus*, — thickly laid on, especially near the eaves, where it is carefully cropped, exposing an edge of from one to two feet in thickness. The roof has four faces, — that is, it is a "hip roof." It is made with a very steep pitch, and comes down low, projecting far over the heads of the upright timbers. This gives a sort of shaded veranda all around the house, and throws the rain quite clear of the walls. The ridge-pole is a peculiar feature; it is fastened to the ridge of the thatch by strong twisted ropes, that give it an ornamental appearance; and its carved ends project at both gables, or rather, over the "hip roofs," to the length of a foot, or more; it is further ornamented by white shells, those of the *cyprea ovula* being most used for the purpose. The

Feegee house presents altogether a picturesque and not inelegant appearance. The worst feature is the low door. There are usually two of them, neither in each house being over three feet in height. The Feegee assigns no reason why his door is made so low; but as he is frequently in expectation of a visitor, with a murderous bludgeon in his grasp, it is possible this may have something to do with his making the entrance so difficult.

The houses of the chiefs, and the great council-house, or temple, — called the "Bure," — are built precisely in the same style; only that both are larger, and the doors, walls, and ridge-poles more elaborately ornamented. The fashionable style of decoration is a plaiting of cocoa fibre, or "sinnet," which is worked and woven around the posts in regular figures of "relievo."

The house described is not universal throughout all the group. There are many "orders" of architecture, and that prevailing in the Windward Islands is different from the style of the Leeward, and altogether of a better kind. Different districts have different forms. In one you may see a village looking like an assemblage of wicker baskets, while in another you might fancy it a collection of rustic arbors. A third seems a collection oblong hayricks, with holes in their sides; while, in a fourth these ricks are conical.

It will be seen that, with this variety in house-building, it would be a tedious task to illustrate the complete architecture of Feegeeans. Even Master Ruskin himself would surrender it up in despair.

Equally tedious would it be to describe the various implements or utensils which a Feegee house contains. The furniture is simple enough. There are neither

chairs, tables, nor bedsteads. The bed is a beautiful mat spread on the däis, or divan; and in the houses of the rich the floors are covered with a similar carpet. These mats are of the finest texture, far superior to those made elsewhere. The materials used are the *Hibiscus tiliaceus*, *Pandanus odoratissimus*, and a species of rush. They are in great abundance in every house, — even the poorest person having his mat to sit or lie upon; and it is they that serve for the broad-spreading sails of the gigantic canoes. In addition to the mats, plenty of tapa-cloth may be seen, and baskets of every shape and size, — the wicker being obtained from the rattan (*flagellaria*), and other sources. One piece of furniture deserves especial mention, — this is the pillow upon which the Feegee lord lays his head when he goes to sleep. It presents but little claim to the appellation of a *downy* pillow; since it is a mere cylinder of hard polished wood, with short arched pedestals to it, to keep it firmly in its place. Its object is to keep the great frizzled mop from being tossed or disarranged, during the hours of repose; and Feegeean vanity enables the owner of the mop to endure this flinty bolster with the most uncomplaining equanimity. If he were possessed of the slightest spark of conscience, even this would be soft, compared with any pillow upon which he might rest his guilty head.

In addition to the baskets, other vessels meet the eye. These are of pottery, as varied in shape and size as they are in kind. There are pots and pans, bowls, dishes, cups and saucers, jars and bottles, — many of them of rare and curious designs, — some red, some ornamented with a glaze obtained from the gum of the

kauri pine, — for this tree is also an indigenous production of the Feegee Islands. Though no potter's wheel is known to the Feegees, the proportions of their vessels are as just and true, and their polish as complete, as if Stafford had produced them. There are cooking pots to be seen of immense size. These are jars formed with mouths wide enough to admit the largest joint. I dare not mention the kind of joint that is frequently cooked in those great caldrons. Ugh! the horrid pots!

Their implements are equally varied and numerous, — some for manufacturing purposes, and others for agriculture. The latter are of the simplest kind. The Feegee plough is merely a pointed stick inserted deeply into the ground, and kept moving about till a lump of the soil is broken upward. This is crushed into mould, first by a light club, and afterwards pulverized with the fingers. The process is slow, but fast enough for the Feegeean, whose farm is only a garden. He requires no plough, neither bullocks nor horses. With taro-roots and sweet potatoes that weigh ten pounds each, yams and yaqonas over one hundred, and plantains producing bunches of a hundred and fifty fruits to the single head, why need he trouble himself by breaking up more surface? His single acre yields him as much vegetable wealth as fifty would to an English farmer!

It is not to be supposed that he has it all to himself; no, nor half of it either; nor yet the fifth part of it. At least four fifths of his sweat has to be expended in tax or tithe; and this brings us to the form of his government. We shall not dwell long upon this subject. Suffice it to say that the great body of the people are in a condition of abject serfdom, — worse than slavery

itself. They own nothing that they can call their own, — not their wives, — not their daughters, — not even their lives! All these may be taken from them at any hour. There is no law against despoiling them, — no check upon the will and pleasure of their chiefs or superiors; and, as these constitute a numerous body, the poor *canaille* have no end of ruffian despoilers. It is an every-day act for a chief to rob, or *club to death*, one of the common people! and no unfrequent occurrence to be himself clubbed to death by his superior, the king! Of these *kings* there are eight in Feegee, — not one, as the old song has it; but the words of the ballad will apply to each of them with sufficient appropriateness. Any one of them will answer to the character of "Musty-fusty-shang!"

These kings have their residences on various islands, and the different parts of the group are distributed somewhat irregularly under their rule. Some islands, or parts of islands, are only tributary to them; others connected by a sort of deferential alliance; and there are communities quite independent, and living under the arbitrary sway of their own chieftains. The kings are not all of equal power or importance; but in this respect there have been many changes, even during the Feegeean historical period, — which extends back only to the beginning of the present century. Sometimes one is the most influential, sometimes another; and in most cases the pre-eminence is obtained by him who possesses the greatest amount of truculence and treachery. He who is most successful in murdering his rivals, and ridding himself of opposition, by the simple application of the club, usually succeeds in becoming for the time head

"king of the Cannibal Islands." I do not mean that he reigns over the whole Archipelago. No king has yet succeeded in uniting all the islands under one government. He only gets so far as to be feared everywhere, and to have tributary presents, and all manner of debasing compliments offered to him. These kings have all their courts and court etiquette, just as their "royal brothers" elsewhere; and the ceremonials observed are quite as complicated and degrading to the dignity of man.

The punishment for neglecting their observance is rather more severe in Feegee than elsewhere. For a decided or wilful non-compliance, the skull of the delinquent is frequently crushed in by the club of his majesty himself, — even in presence of a full "drawing-room." Lesser or accidental mistakes, or even the exhibition of an ungraceful *gaucherie*, are punished by the loss of a finger: the consequence of which is, that in Feegee there are many fingers missing! Indeed, a complete set is rather the exception than the rule. If a king or great chief should chance to miss his foot and slip down, it is the true *ton* for all those who are near or around him to fall likewise, — the crowd coming down, literally like a "thousand of bricks!"

I might detail a thousand customs to show how far the dignity of the human form is debased and disgraced upon Feegee soil; but the subject could be well illustrated nearer home. Flunkeyism is a fashion unfortunately not confined to the Feegeean archipelago; and though the forms in which it exhibits itself there may be different, the sentiment is still the same. It must ever appear where men are politically unequal, — wherever there is a class possessed of hereditary privileges.

I come to the last, — the darkest feature in the Feegeean character, — the horrid crime and custom of cannibalism. I could paint a picture, and fill up the details with the testimony of scores of eyewitnesses, — a picture that would cause your heart to weep. It is too horrid to be given here. My pen declines the office; and, therefore, I must leave the painful story untold

MUNDRUCUS, OR BEHEADERS.

In our general sketch of the Amazonian Indians it was stated that there were some few tribes who differed in certain customs from all the rest, and who might even be regarded as *odd among the odd.* One of these tribes is the *Mundrucu*, which, from its numbers and warlike strength, almost deserves to be styled a nation. It is, at all events, a powerful confederacy, of different tribes, linked together in one common nationality, and including in their league other Indians which the Mundrucus themselves first conquered, and afterwards associated with themselves on terms of equality; in other words, "annexed" them. The same sort of annexation or alliance is common among the tribes of North America; as in the case of the powerful Comanche nation, who extend their protecting alliance over the Wacoes, Washites, and Cayguäas or Kioways.

The *Mahüe* is the principal tribe that is patronized in this fashion by the Mundrucus, and the two together number at least 20,000 souls.

Before the days of the Portuguese slave-hunting, the Mundrucus occupied the south bank of the Amazon, from the mouth of the Tapajos to that of the Madeira. This

infamous traffic had the effect of clearing the banks of the great river of its native inhabitants, — except such of them as chose to submit to slavery, or become *neophytes*, by adopting the monkish faith. Neither of these courses appeared pleasing in the eyes of the Mundrucus, and they adopted the only alternative that was likely to insure their independence, — by withdrawing from the dangerous proximity of the sanguinary slave-trade.

This retreat of the Mundrucus, however, was by no means an ignominious flight. The withdrawal was voluntary on their part, and not compulsory, as was the case with weaker tribes. From the earliest times they had presented a firm front to the Portuguese encroachments, and the latter were even forced into a sort of nefarious alliance with them. The leaving the Amazon on the part of the Mundrucus was rather the result of a negotiation, by which they conceded their territory — between the mouths of the Tapajos and Madeira — to the Brazilian government; and to this hour they are not exactly unfriendly to Brazilian *whites*, though to the mulattoes and negroes, who constitute a large proportion of the Brazilian population, the Mundrucu knows no other feeling than that of a deadly hostility. The origin of their hatred of the Brazilian blacks is to be found in a revolt which occurred in the provinces of the Lower Amazon (at Para) in 1835. It was a *caste* revolution against whites, but more especially against *European* Portuguese. In this affair the Mundrucus were employed against the darker-skinned rebels — the *Cabanos*, as they were called — and did great service in putting down the rebellion. Hence they retain a lingering spark of friendship for their *ci-devant* white allies; or

perhaps it would be more correct to say they do not actually hate them, but carry on a little commerce with their traders. For all that, they occasionally cut the throats of a few of the latter, — especially those who do not come to deal directly with them, but who pass through their country in going from the Amazon to the diamond mines of Brazil. These last are called *Monçaos*, and their business is to carry supplies from the towns on the Amazon (Santarem and Para) to the miners of gold and washers of diamonds in the district of Matto Grosso, of which Cuiaba is the capital. Their route is by water and "portage" up the Tapajos river, and through the territory of the dreaded Mundrucus, — requiring a journey of six months, as perilous and toilsome as it is tedious.

The present residence of the Mundrucus is between the Tapajos and Madeira, as formerly, but far up on both rivers. On the Tapajos, above what are known as the "Caxoeiras," or Cataracts, their villages are found. There they dwell, free from all molestation on the part of the whites; their borders extending widely around them, and limited only by contact with those of other warlike tribes like themselves, who are their deadly enemies. Among these last are the *Muras*, who dwell at the mouths of the Madeira and Rio Negro.

The Mundrucus build the *malocca*, elsewhere described; only in their case it is not used as a dwelling, but rather as a grand arsenal, a council-chamber, a ball-room, and, if need be, a fortress. When fearing an attack, all sleep in it "under arms." It is a structure of large size and great strength, usually rendered more unassailable by being "chinked" and plastered with

day. It is in this building that are deposited those horrid trophies which have given to the Mundrucus their terrible title of *decapitadores*, or "beheaders." The title and its origin shall be presently explained.

Around the great malocca the huts are placed, forming a village, and in these the people ordinarily dwell.

The Mundrucus are not without ample means of subsistence. Like most other Amazonian tribes, they cultivate a little manioc, plantains, and even maize; and they know how to prepare the *farinha* meal, and, unfortunately, also the detestable *chicha*, the universal beverage of the South American aborigines. They have their vessels of calabash — both of the vegetable and arborescent kinds — and a full set of implements and utensils for the field and kitchen. Their war weapons are those common to other Amazonian tribes, and they sometimes also carry the spear. They have canoes of hollow trees; and, of course, fishing and hunting are the employments of the men, — the women, as almost everywhere else among Indians, doing the drudgery, — the tilling and reaping, the "hewing of wood and the drawing of water," the making the household utensils and using them, — all such offices being beneath the dignity of the "lordly," or rather *lazy* savage.

I have said that they carry on a commercial intercourse with the white traders. It is not of much magnitude, and their exports consist altogether of the native and spontaneous productions of the soil, sarsaparilla being one of the chief articles. They gather this (the women and children do) during six months of the year. The other six months no industry is followed, — as this period is spent in hostile excursions against the neigh

boring tribes. Their imports consist of iron tools and pieces for weapons; but they more especially barter the product of their labor for ornamental gewgaws, — such as savages universally admire and desire. Their sarsaparilla is good, and much sought for in the medical market.

Every one is acquainted with the nature and character of this valuable medicinal root, the appearance of which must also be known to almost everybody, — since it is so very common for our druggists to display the bundles of it in their shop windows. Perhaps every one is not acquainted with the fact, that the sarsaparilla root is the product of a great many different species of plants most of them of the genus *Similax*, but not a few belonging to plants of other genera, as those of *Carex* and *Herreria* the roots of which are also sold as sarsaparilla. The species of simlax are widely distributed throughout the whole torrid zone, in Asia, Africa, and America. and some kinds are found growing many degrees outside the tropics, — as is the case in Virginia and the valley of the Mississippi, and also on the other side of the Pacific on the great continent-island of Australia.

The best sarsaparilla, however, is that which is produced in tropical countries, and especially in moist situations, where the atmosphere is at once hot and humid It requires these conditions to concentrate the virtue of its sap, and render it more active.

It would be idle to give a list of the different species of simlax that furnish the sarsaparilla root of the pharmacopeia. There is an almost endless number of them, and they are equally varied in respect to excellence of quality; some kinds are in reality almost worthless, and

for this reason, in using it as a medicine, great care should be taken in the selection of the species. Like all other articles, either of food or medicine, the valuable kinds are the scarcest; the reason in this case being that the best sarsaparilla is found in situations not only difficult of access, but where the gathering of its root is attended with considerable danger, from the unhealthy nature of the climate and the hostility of the savages in whose territory it grows. As to the quantity that may be obtained, there is no limit, on the score of any scarcity of the plant itself, since it is found throughout all the countries of tropical America plenteously distributed both in species and individual plants. Such quantities of it grow along the banks of some South-American rivers, that the Indians have a belief that those streams known as *black waters* — such as the Rio Negro and others — derive their peculiar color from the roots of this plant. This, however, is an erroneous supposition, as there are many of the *white-water* rivers that run through regions abundantly supplied with the sarsaparilla root. The black water, therefore, must arise from some other cause, as yet unknown.

As observed, the sarsaparilla of the Mundrucu country is of the very best quality. It is the *Similax papyracea* of Soiret, and is known in commerce as the "Lisbon," or "Brazilian." It is a climbing plant, or under-shrub, the stem of which is flattened and angular, with rows of prickles standing along the prominent edges. Its leaves are of an oval acuminated shape, and marked with longitudinal nerves. It shoots up without any support, to a height of fifteen or twenty

feet, after which it embraces the surrounding branches of trees and spreads to a great distance in every direction. The main root sends out many long tendrils, all of like thickness, covered with a brownish bark, or sometimes of a dark-gray color. These tendrils are fibrous, and about as thick as a quill. They present a constant tendency to become crooked, and they are also wrinkled longitudinally, with here and there some smaller lateral fibres branching off from the sides.

It is in the bark or epidermis of the rhizomes that the medicinal virtue lies; but the tendrils — both rhizome and bark — are collected together, and no attempt is made to separate them, until they have reached their commercial destination. Indeed, even these are sold together, the mode of preparing the root being left to the choice of the consumer, or the apothecary who procures it.

The Mundrucus collect it during the six months of the rainy season, partly because during the remaining six they are otherwise employed, and partly for the reason that, in the time of rain, the roots are more easily extracted from the damp soil. The process simply consists in digging them up or dragging them out of the earth — the latter mode especially where the tendrils lie near the surface, and they will pull up without breaking. If the main root be not dug out, it will send forth new tendrils, which in a short time would yield a new crop; but the improvident savages make no prudential calculations of this kind — present convenience forming their sole consideration; and on this account both the root and plant are generally destroyed by them during the operation of collecting.

As already stated, this labor devolves upon the women, who are also assisted in it by their children. They proceed into the depths of the forest — where the smilax grows in greatest abundance — and after collecting as much root as they can carry home with them, they return with their bundles to the malocca. When fresh gathered the sarsaparilla is heavy enough — partly on account of the sap which it then contains, and partly from the quantity of the mud or earth that adheres to the corrugated surface of the roots.

It is extremely probable that in this fresh state the virtue of the sarsaparilla, as a blood-purifier, is much greater than after it has passed through the channels of commerce; and the writer of this sketch has some reason, derived from personal experience, to believe that such is the case. Certain it is, that the reputation of this invaluable drug is far less in countries where the plant does not grow, than in those where it is common and can be obtained in its fresh state. In all parts of Spanish America its virtues are unquestioned, and experience has led to a more extensive use of it there than elsewhere. It is probable, therefore, that the virtue exists in the juice rather than the cortical integument of the rhizome; and this of course would be materially altered and deteriorated, if not altogether destroyed, in the process of exsiccation, which must necessarily take place in the time required for transporting it to distant parts of the world. In the European pharmacopeia it is the epidermis of the root which is supposed to contain the sanitary principle; and this, which is of a mucilaginous nature and slightly bitter taste, is employed, both in decoctions and infusions,

as a tonic and alterative. In America, however, it is generally taken for what is termed *purifying the blood* — for the same purpose as the rhizomes of the *Laurus sassafras* and other plants are used; but the sarsaparilla is generally considered the best, and it certainly *is* the best of all known medicines for this purpose. Why it has fallen in the estimation of the Old World practitioners, or why it never obtained so great a reputation as it has in America, may arise from two circumstances. First, that the root offered for sale is generally the product of the less valuable species; and second, that the sap, and not the rhizome, may be the part that contains the virtuous principle.

When the collected roots have been kept for awhile they become dry and light, and for the convenience of stowage and carriage — an important consideration to the trader in his eight-ton *garratea* — it is necessary to have the roots done up in packages of a uniform length and thickness. These packages are formed by laying the roots side by side, and doubling in the ends of the longer ones. A bundle of the proper size for stowage contains an *arroba* of twenty-five pounds, though the weight varies according to the condition of the root. Uniformity in size is the chief object aimed at, and the bundles are made of a round or cylindrical shape, about five inches in diameter, and something more than a yard in length. They are trimmed off small at the ends — so as to admit of stowage without leaving any empty space between two tiers of them — and each bundle is tightly corded round from one end to the other with a "sipo," or creeping plant.

It has been stated that this "sipo" is a root of the

sarsaparilla itself, with the bark scraped off; and, indeed, its own root would serve well enough — were it not that putting it to such a use would destroy its medicinal value, and thus cause a considerable waste of the costly material. The sarsaparilla is not to be had for nothing even upon the banks of the Tapajos. A bundle of the best quality does not leave the hands of the Mundrucu until about four dollars' worth of exchange commodities have been put into them, which would bring the price of it to something over sixpence a pound. He is, therefore, a little particular about wasting a material that has cost him — or rather his wife and children — so much trouble in collecting. His cordage is obtained more cheaply, and consists of the long, flexible roots of a species of *pothos*, which roots — being what are termed *aërial* and not buried in the ground — require no labor or digging to get at them. It is only necessary to stretch up the hand, and pull them down from the tops of lofty trees, from which they hang like streamers, often to the length of a hundred feet. These are toughened by the bark being scraped off; and when that is done they are ready for use, and serve not only to tie up the bundles of sarsaparilla, but for many other purposes in the domestic economy of the Mundrucus.

In addition to the sarsaparilla, the Mundrucu furnishes the trader with several other items of commercial value — for his climate, although one of the most unhealthy in all the Amazon region, on account of its great heat and humidity, is for that very reason one of the most fertile. Nearly all those tropical vegetable products which are characteristics of Brazilian export commerce can here be produced of the most luxuriant kind

but it is only those that grow spontaneously at his very doors that tempt the Mundrucu to take the trouble of collecting them.

There is one article, however, which he not only takes some trouble to collect, but also to manufacture into an item of commercial exchange — a very rare item indeed. This is the *guarana*, which is manufactured from the fruit of a tree almost peculiar to the Mundrucu territory — since nowhere is it found so abundantly as on the Tapajos. It is so prized in the Brazilian settlements as to command almost its weight in silver when transported thither. It is the constituent element of a drink, which has a stimulating effect on the system, somewhat more powerful than tea or coffee. It will prevent sleep; but its most valuable property is, that it is a good febrifuge, equal to the best quinine. *Guarana* is prepared from the seeds of an inga — one of the *Mimosacæ*. It is a low, wide-spreading tree like most of the mimosa family. The legumes are gathered, and the seeds roasted in them. The latter are then taken out, and after being ground to powder, are mixed with water so as to make a tough paste, which is moulded into little bricks, and when dried is ready for use. The beverage is then prepared by scraping a table-spoonful of dust from the brick, and mixing it with about a pint of water; and the dry paste, keeping for any length of time, is ready whenever wanted.

The *guarana* bush grows elswhere in the Amazon valley, and on some headwaters of the Orinoco, where certain tribes also know how to prepare the drink. But it is sparingly distributed, and is nowhere so common as on the upper Tapajos; hence its high price in the

markets of Brazil. The Mundrucu manufactures it, not only for "home use," but for "exportation."

He prepares another singular article of luxury, and this he makes exclusively for his own use, — not for the gratification of his lips or palate, but for his nose, — in other words, a snuff. Do not fancy, however, that it is snuff of the ordinary kind — the pulverized produce of innocent tobacco. No such thing; but a composition of such a powerful and stimulating character, that he who inhales it feels as if struck by an electric shock; his body trembles; his eyes start forward as if they would forsake their sockets; his limbs fail to support him; and he drops to the earth like one in a state of intoxication! For a short time he is literally mad; but the fit is soon over, — lasting usually only a few minutes, — and then a feeling of renewed strength, courage, and joyousness succeeds. Such are the consequences of taking snuff with a Mundrucu.

And now to describe the nature of the substance which produces these powerful effects.

Like the *guarana* this snuff is a preparation, having for its basis the seeds of a leguminous tree. This time, however, it is an *acacia*, not an *inga*. It is the *acacia niopo;* so called because "niopo" is the name given to the snuff itself by certain tribes (the Ottomacs and others), who, like the Mundrucus, are snuff-takers. It is also called *curupa*, and the apparatus for preparing and taking it — for there is an apparatus of an extensive kind — is termed *parica*, in the general language (*lingoa geral*) of the Amazonian regions.

We shall describe the preparation, the apparatus, and the ceremonial.

The pods of the *Acacia niopo* — a small tree, with very delicate pinnate leaves — are plucked when ripe. They are then cut into small pieces and flung into a vessel of water. In this they remain until macerated, and until the seeds have turned black. These are then picked out, pounded in a mortar, which is usually the pericarp of the *sapuçaia*, or "monkey-pot" tree (*Lecythis ollaria*). The pounding reduces them to a paste, which is taken up, clapped between the hands and formed into little cakes — but not until it has been mixed with some manioc flour, some lime from a burnt shell (a *helix*), and a little juice from the fresh leaves of the "abuta" — a menispermous plant of the genus *Cocculus*. The cakes are then dried or "barbecued" upon a primitive gridiron — the bars of which are saplings of hard wood — and when well-hardened the snuff is ready for the "box." In a box it is actually carried — usually one made out of some rare and beautiful shell.

The ceremonial of taking the snuff is the most singular part of the performance. When a Mundrucu feels inclined for a "pinch" — though it is something more than a *pinch* that he inhales when he *does* feel inclined — he takes the cake out of the box, scrapes off about a spoonful of it into a shallow, saucer-shaped vessel of the calabash kind, and then spreads the powder all over the bottom of the vessel in a regular "stratification." The spreading is not performed by the fingers, but with a tiny, pencil-like brush made out of the bristles of the great ant-eater (*Myrmecophaga jubata*).

He is in no hurry, but takes his time, — for as you may guess from its effects, the performance is not one so

often repeated as that of ordinary snuff-taking. When the *niopo* dust is laid to his liking, another implement is brought into play, the construction of which it is also necessary to describe. It is a "machine" of six to eight inches in length, and is made of two quills from the wing of the *gaviao real*, or "harpy eagle" (*Harpyia destructor*). These quills are placed side by side for the greater part of their length, forming two parallel tubes, and they are thus neatly whipped together by a thread. At one end they are pressed apart so as to diverge to a width corresponding to the breadth between the Mundrucu's nostrils, — where it is intended they shall be placed during the ceremony of snuff-taking.

And thus are they placed, — one end of each quill being slightly intruded within the line of the septum, while the other end rests upon the snuff, or wanders over the surface of the saucer, till all the powder placed there is drawn up and inhaled, producing the convulsive effects already detailed.

The shank-bone of a species of bird — thought to be be a plover — is sometimes used instead of the quills. It is hollow, and has a forking-tube at the end. This kind is not common or easily obtained, for the niopo-taker who has one, esteems it as the most valuable item of his apparatus.

Snuffing the niopo is not exclusively confined to the Mundrucu. We have seen elsewhere that it is also a habit of the dirt-eating Ottomacs; and other tribes on the upper Amazon practise it. But the Mahües, already mentioned as the allies of the Mundrucus, are the most confirmed snuff-takers of all.

Another odd custom of the Mundrucus is their habit

of "tatooing." I speak of real tatooing, — that is, marking the skin with dots and lines that cannot be effaced, in contradistinction to mere *painting*, or staining, which can easily be washed off. The Mundrucus paint also, with the *anotto*, *huitoc*, *caruta*, and other pigments, but in this they only follow the practice of hundreds of other tribes. The true *tatoo* is a far different affair, and scarcely known among the aborigines of America, though common enough in the islands of the South Sea. A few other Indian tribes practise it to a limited extent, — as is elsewhere stated, — but among the Mundrucus it is an "institution;" and painful though the process be, it has to be endured by every one in the nation, "every mother's son," and daughter as well, that are cursed with a Mundrucu for their father.

It is upon the young people the infliction is performed, — when they are about eight or ten years of age.

The *tatoo* has been so often described, that I should not repeat it here; but there are a few "points" peculiar to Mundrucu tatooing, and a few others, not elsewhere understood.

The performance is usually the work of certain old crones, who, from long practice, have acquired great skill in the art.

The chief instrument used is a comb of thorns, — not a single thorn, as is generally stated, — but a tier or row of them set comb-fashion. These thorns are the spines of the "murumuru," or "pupunha" palm (*Gullielmia speciosa*). Humboldt states that this palm is smooth and spineless, but in this the great, good man was in error. Its trunk is so covered with thorns or spines, that when the Indians require to climb it — for the purpose of

procuring the valuable fruits, which they eat variously prepared — they have to erect a staging, or rude sort of ladder, to be able to get at them.

The comb, then, is pressed down upon the skin of the "tatooee," till all the points have penetrated the flesh, and a row of holes is laid open, from which the blood flows profusely. As soon as this can be wiped off, ashes of a burnt gum or pitch are rubbed into the wounds, which, when healed, appear like so many dots of a deep bluish or black color. In this way the young Mundrucus, both boys and girls, get those regular rows of dotted lines, which traverse their forehead and cheeks, their arms and limbs, breasts, and bodies in such eccentric fashion. It has often been asked how these lines of dots were carried over the skin in such straight and symmetrical rows, forming regular parallel lines, or other geometrical patterns. The "comb" will explain the mystery.

The tatoo, with a few strings of shell-beads or necklaces, and bracelets of monkey and jaguar teeth, is all the dress which is permitted to the Mundrucu belle. In Mundrucu-land it is the reverse of what is practised among civilized people: the men are the exponents of the fashions, and keep exclusively to themselves the cosmetics and bijouterie. Not contented with being tatooed, these also *paint* their bodies, by way of "overcoat," and also adorn themselves with the bright feathers of birds. They wear on their heads the beautiful circlet of macaw plumes, and on grand occasions appear in the magnificent "feather dress," so long celebrated as the peculiar costume of the tropical-forest Indian. These dresses their women weave and border, at a sacrifice of much tedious

labor. They also ornament their arms and legs with rows of feathers around them, the tips turned upward and backward.

The tatooing is confined to the Mundrucus proper, — their allies, the Mahües not following the practice, but contenting themselves with a simple "coat" of paint.

It is difficult to say what motive first inducted human beings into this singular and barbarous custom. It is easier to tell why it is still followed, and the "why" is answered by saying that the Mundrucus "scarify" themselves, because their fathers did so before them. Many a custom among civilized nations, but little less ridiculous, if we could only think so, rests upon a similar basis. Perhaps our modern abominable hat — though it has a different origin — is not less ludicrous than the tatooed patterns of the savage. Certainly it is quite equal to it in ugliness, and is likely to rival it in permanence, — to our sorrow be it said. But even *we* deal slightly in the tatoo. Our jolly Jack would be nobody in the forecastle without "Polly," in blue, upon his weather-beaten breast, and the *foul anchor* upon his arm.

But the Mundrucu baptizes his unfortunate offspring in a still more savage fashion. The tattoo may be termed the *baptism in blood*, performed at the tender age of ten. When the youth — fortunately it does not extend to the weaker sex — has attained to the age of eighteen, he has then to undergo the *tocandeira*, which deserves to be called *the baptism of fire!*

This too merits description. When the Mundrucu youth would become a candidate for manhood, a pair of "gloves" is prepared for him. These consist of two pieces of a palm-tree bark, with the pith hollowed out, but

left in at one end. The hollow part is of sufficient diameter to draw over the hands loosely, and so long as to reach up to mid-arm, after the fashion of gauntlets.

The "gloves" being got ready, are nearly filled with ants, not only the venomous red ants, but all other species, large or small, that can either bite or sting, of which tropical South America possesses an endless variety. With this "lining" the "mittens" are ready for use, and the "novice" is compelled to draw them on. Should he refuse, or even exhibit a disposition to shrink from the fiery trial, he is a lost man From that hour he need never hold up his head, much less offer his hand and heart, for there is not a maiden in all Mundrucu-land that would listen to his softest speech. He is forever debarred from the pleasure of becoming a benedict. Of course he does not refuse, but plunging his hands into the "mittens," into the very midst of the crawling host, he sets about the ceremony.

He must keep on the gloves till he has danced before every door in the village. He must sing as if from very joy; and there is plenty of music to accompany him, drums and fifes, and human voices, — for his parents and relatives are by his side encouraging him with their songs and gestures. He is in pain, — in positive agony, — for these venomous ants both sting and bite, and have been busy at both from the very first moment. Each moment his agony grows more intense, his sufferings more acute, for the poison is thrilling through his veins, — he turns pale, — his eyes become blood-cast, — his breast quivers with emotion and his limbs tremble beneath him; but despite all this, woe to him if he utter a cry of weakness! It would brand him with an eterna-

stigma, — he would never be suffered to carry the Mundrucu lance to battle, — to poise upon its point the ghastly trophy of the *Beheaders*. On, on, through the howling throng, amidst friends and relatives with faces anxious as his own; on to the sound of the shrill-piping reed and the hoarse booming of the Indian drum; on till he stands in front of the cabin of the chief! There again the song is sung, the "jig" is danced, both proudly prolonged till the strength of the performer becomes completely exhausted. Then, and not till then, the gloves are thrown aside, and the wearer falls back, into the arms of his friends, "sufficiently punished!"

This is the hour of congratulation. Girls gather round him, and fling their tatooed arms about his neck. They cluster and cling upon him, singing his song of triumph; but just at that crisis he is not in the mood for soft caresses; and, escaping from their blandishments, he makes a rush towards the river. On reaching its bank he plunges bodily in, and there remains up to his neck in the water, till the cooling fluid has to some extent eased his aching arms, and tranquillized the current of his boiling blood. When he emerges from the water, he is a man, fit stuff for a Mundrucu warrior, and eligible to the hand of a Mundrucu maiden.

It may be remarked that this terrible ordeal of the Mundrucus, though, perhaps, peculiar among South-American Indians, has its parallel among certain tribes of the north, — the Mandans and others, as detailed by Catlin, one of the most acute of ethnological observers.

The *scalp trophy*, too, of the Northern Indian has its analogy in a Mundrucu custom — that which distinguishes him most of all, and which has won for him the terrible title of "Beheader."

This singular appellation is now to be explained.

When a Mundrucu has succeeded in killing an enemy, he is not, like his northern compeer, satisfied with only the skin of the head. *He must have the whole head*, scalp and skull, bones, brains, and all! And he takes all, severing the head with his knife by a clean cut across the small of the neck, and leaving the trunk to the vulture king. With the ghastly trophy poised upon the point of his lance, he returns triumphant to the malocca to receive the greetings of his tribe and the praises of his chief.

But the warlike exploit requires a memento — some token by which he may perpetuate its fame. The art of printing does not exist among the Mundrucus, and there is no *friendly* pen to record the deed. It has been done, — behold the evidence! much clearer than often accompanies the exploits of civilized heroes. There is the evidence of an enemy slain; there is the grim, gory voucher, palpable both to sight and touch — proof positive that there is a dead body somewhere.

Of course, such evidence is sufficient for the present; but how about the future? As time passes, the feat may be forgotten, as great deeds are elsewhere. Somebody may even deny it. Some slanderous tongue may whisper, or insinuate, or openly declare that it was no exploit after all — that there was no dead man; for the vultures by this time would have removed the body, and the white ants *(termites)* would have equally extinguished all traces of the bones. How, then, are the proofs to be preserved? *By preserving the head!* And this is the very idea that is in the mind of the Mundrucu warrior. He is resolved not to permit his exploit to be buried in

oblivion by *burying the head* of his enemy. That tongue, though mute, will tell the tale to posterity; that pallid cheek, though, perhaps, it may become a little shrivelled in the "drying," will still be smooth enough to show that there is no *tatoo*, and to be identified as the skin of an enemy. Some young Mundrucu, yet unborn, will read in the countenance of that grinning and gory witness, the testimony of his father's prowess. The head, therefore, must be preserved; and it is preserved with as much care as the cherished portrait of a famous ancestor. The cranial relic is even *embalmed*, as if out of affection for him to whom it belonged. The brains and eye-balls are removed, to facilitate the process of desiccation; but false eyes are inserted, and the tongue, teeth, and ears, scalp, skull, and hair, are all retained, not only retained, but "titivated" out in the most approved style of fashion. The long hair is carefully combed out, parted, and arranged; brilliant feathers of rock-cock and macaw are planted behind the ears and twisted in the hanging tresses. An ornamental string passes through the tongue, and by this the trophy is suspended from the beams of the great malocca.

It is not permitted to remain there. In some dark niche of this Golgotha — this Mundruquu Westminster — it might be overlooked and forgotten. To prevent this it is often brought forth, and receives many an airing. On all warlike and festive occasions does it appear, poised upon the point of the warrior's lance, and even in peaceful times it may be seen — along with hundreds of its like — placed in the circular row around the manioc clearing, and lending its demure countenance to the labors of the field.

It is not a little singular that this custom of embalming the heads of their enemies is found among the Dyaks of Borneo, and the process in both places is ludicrously similar. Another rare coincidence occurs between the Amazonian tribes and the Bornean savages, viz. in both being provided with the blow-gun. The *gravitana* of the American tribes is almost identical with the sumpitan of Borneo. It furnishes a further proof of our theory regarding an original connection between the American Indians and the savages of the great South Sea.

The Mundrucu is rarely ill off in the way of food. When he is so, it is altogether his own fault, and chargeable to his indolent disposition. The soil of his territory is of the most fertile kind, and produces many kinds of edible fruits spontaneously, as the nuts of the *pupunha* palm and the splendid fruits of the *Bertholetia excelsa*, or juvia-tree, known in Europe as "Brazil nuts." Of these then are two kinds, as mentioned elsewhere, the second being a tree of the genus *Lecythys*, — the *Lecythys ollaria*, or "monkey-pot" tree. It obtains this trivial name from the circumstance, first, of its great pericarp, almost as large as a child's head, having a movable top or lid, which falls off when the fruit ripens; and secondly, from the monkeys being often seen drawing the seeds or nuts out of that part of the shell which remains attached to the tree, and which, bearing a considerable resemblance to a pot in its shape, is thus very appropriately designated the pot of the monkeys. The common Indian name of the monkey-pot tree is *sapucaya*, and the nuts of this species are so called in commerce, though they are also termed Brazil-nuts. They are of a

more agreeable flavor than the true Brazil-nuts, and not so easily obtained, as the *Lecythys* is less generally distributed over the Amazonian valley. It requires a peculiar soil, and grows only in those tracts that are subject to the annual inundations of the rivers.

The true Brazil-nuts are the "juvia" trees of the Indians; and the season for collecting them is one of the *harvests* of the Mundrucu people. The great pericarps — resembling large cocoa-nuts when stripped of the fibres — do not open and shed their seeds, as is the case with the monkey-pot tree. The whole fruit falls at once; and as it is very heavy, and the branches on which it grows are often nearly a hundred feet from the ground, it may easily be imagined that it comes down like a ten-pound shot; in fact, one of them falling upon the head of a Mundrucu would be very likely to crush his cranium, as a bullet would an egg-shell; and such accidents not unfrequently occur to persons passing imprudently under the branches of the Bertholetia when its nuts are ripe. Sometimes the monkeys, when on the ground looking after those that have fallen, become victims to the like accident; but these creatures are cunning reasoners, and being by experience aware of the danger, will scarce ever go under a juvia-tree, but when passing one always make a wide circuit around it. The monkeys cannot of themselves open the great pericarp, as they do that of the "sapucuya," but are crafty enough to get at the precious contents, notwithstanding. In doing this they avail themselves of the help of other creatures, that have also a motive in opening the juvia shells — cavies and other small rodent animals, whose teeth, formed for this very purpose, enable them

to gnaw a hole in the ligneous pericarps, hard and thick as they are. Meanwhile the monkeys, squatted around, watch the operation in a careless, nonchalant sort of way, as if they had no concern whatever in the result; but as soon as they perceive that an entrance has been effected, big enough to admit their hand, they rush forward, drive off the weaker creature, who has been so long and laboriously at work, and take possession of the prize.

Neither does the Mundrucu nut-gatherer get possession of the juvia fruit without a certain degree of danger and toil. He has to climb the tallest trees, to secure the whole crop at one time; and while engaged in collecting those upon the ground, he is in danger of a blow from odd ones that are constantly falling. To secure his skull against accidents, he wears upon his head a thick wooden cap or helmet, — after the fashion of the hats worn by our firemen, — and he is always careful to keep his body in an upright attitude, stooping as seldom as he can avoid doing so, lest he might get a thump between the shoulders, or upon the spine of his back, which would be very likely to flatten him out upon the earth. These Brazil-nuts furnish the Mundrucu with a portion of his food, — as they also do many other tribes of Amazonian Indians, — and they are also an item of Indian commerce, being collected from among the different tribes by the Portuguese and Spanish traders.

But the Mundrucu does not depend altogether on the spontaneous productions of the forest, which at best furnish only a precarious supply. He does something in the agricultural line, — cultivating a little manioc root, with plantains, yams, and other tropical plants that produce an enormous yield with the very slightest trouble

or attention; and this is exactly what suits him. A few days spent by the little community in the yam patch — or rather, by the women and children, for these are the agricultural laborers in Mundrucu land — is sufficient to ensure an abundant supply of breadstuff for the whole year. With regard to flesh-meat he is not so well off, for the domestic animals, and oxen more especially, do not thrive in the Amazon country. In Mundrucu land, the carnivorous jaguar, aided by flies and vampire bats, would soon destroy them, even if the Indian had the inclination to raise them, which he has not.

Instead of beef, therefore, he contents himself with fish, and occasionally a steak from the great tapir, or a griskin of *manati*. Birds, too, furnish him with an occasional meal; but the staple article of his flesh diet is obtained from the *quadrumana*, — the numerous species of monkeys with which his forests abound. These he obtains by shooting them down from the trees with his bow and arrows, and also by various other hunting devices.

His mode of cooking them is sufficiently peculiar to be described. A large log fire is first kindled and permitted to burn until a sufficient quantity of red cinders are produced. Over these cinders a grating is erected with green saplings of wood, laid parallel to each other like the bars of a gridiron, and upon this the "joint" is laid.

Nothing is done to the monkey before its being placed on the gridiron. Its skin is not removed, and even the intestines are not always taken out. The fire will singe off the hair sufficiently to content a Mundrucu stomach, and the hide is broiled and eaten with the flesh. It is thus literally "carne con cuero."

It may be observed that this forest gridiron, or "barbecue," as it is properly termed, is not an idea exclusively confined to South America. It is in use among the Indians of the north, and various uncivilized tribes in other parts of the world.

Sometimes the Mundrucu does not take the trouble to construct the gridiron. When on the march in some warlike expedition that will not allow time for being particular about the mode of cooking, the joint is broiled upon a spit over the common fire. The spit is simply a stick, sharpened at both ends, one of which impales the monkey, and the other is stuck into the ground. The stick is then set with a lean towards the fire, so as to bring the carcass over the blaze. While on the spit the monkey appears in a sitting position, with its head upward, and its long tail hanging along the sapling, — just as if it were still living, and in one of its most natural attitudes, clinging to the branch of a tree! The sight is sufficiently comical; but sometimes a painful spectacle has been witnessed, — painful to any one but a savage: when the young of the monkey has been captured along with its dam, and still recognizing the form of its parent, — even when all the hair has been singed off, and the skin has become calcined by the fire, — is seen rushing forward into the very flames, and with plaintive cry inviting the maternal embrace! Such an affecting incident has been often witnessed amid the forests of Amazonia.

We conclude our sketch of the Mundrucus, by stating that their form of government is despotic, though not to an extreme degree. The "tushao," or chief, has considerable power, though it is not absolute, and does not extend to the taking of life, — unless the object of his

displeasure be a slave, and many of these are held in abject bondage among the Mundrucus.

The Mundrucu religion resembles that of many other tribes both in North and South America. It consists in absurd ceremonies, and appeals to the good and evil spirits of the other world, and is mixed up with a vast deal of quackery in relation to the ills that afflict the Mundrucu in this life. In other words, it is a combination of the priest and doctor united in one, that arch-charlatan known to the North-American Indians as the "Medicine-man," and among the Mundrucus as the "Puge."

THE CENTAURS OF THE "GRAN CHACO."

I HAVE elsewhere stated that a broad band of independent Indian territory — that is, territory never really subdued or possessed by the Spaniards — traverses the interior of South America, extending longitudinally throughout the whole continent. Beginning at Cape Horn, it ends in the peninsula of the free *Goajiros*, which projects into the Caribbean Sea, — in other words, it is nearly 5,000 miles in length. In breadth it varies much. In Patagonia and a portion of the Pampas country it extends from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and it is of still wider extent on the latitude of the Amazon river, where the whole country, from the Atlantic to the Peruvian Andes, — with the exception of some thinly-placed Brazilian settlements, — is occupied by tribes of independent Indians. At either point this territory will appear — upon maps — to be interrupted by tracts of country possessing civilized settlements. The names of towns and villages are set as thickly as if the country were well peopled; and numerous roads are traced, forming a labyrinthine network upon the paper. A broad belt of this kind extends from the Lower Parana (La Plata) to the Andes of Chili, constituting the upper

provinces of the "Argentine Confederation;" another apparently joins the settlements of Bolivia and Brazil; and again in the north, the provinces of Venezuela appear to be united to those of New Granada.

All this, however, is more apparent than real. The towns upon the maps are in general mere *rancherias*, or collections of huts; some of them are the names of fortified posts, and a large proportion are but ruins, — the ruins of monkish mission settlements long since gone to destruction, and with little else than the name on the map to testify that they ever had an existence. The roads are no roads at all, nothing more than tracings on the chart showing the general route of travel.

Even across the Argentine provinces — where this nomenclature appears thickest upon the map — the horse-Indian of the Pampas extends his forays at will; his "range" meeting, and, in some cases, "dove-tailing" into that of the tribes dwelling upon the northern side of these settlements. The latter, in their turn, carry their plundering expeditions across to the Campos Parexis, on the head-waters of the Amazon, whence stretches the independent territory, far and wide to the Amazon itself; thence to the Orinoco, and across the *Llanos* to the shores of the Maracaibo Gulf — the free range of the independent Goajiros.

This immense belt of territory, then, is in actual possession of the aborigines. Although occupied at a few points by the white race, — Spanish and Portuguese, — the occupation scarce deserves the name. The settlements are sparse and rather *retrograde* than *progressive*. The Indian ranges through and around them, wherever and whenever his inclination leads him; and only when

some humiliating treaty has secured him a temporary respite from hostilities does the colonist enjoy tranquillity. At other times he lives in continual dread, scarce daring to trust himself beyond the immediate vicinity of his house or village, both of which he has been under the necessity of fortifying.

It is true that at one period of South American history things were not quite so bad. When the Spanish nation was at the zenith of its power a different condition existed; but even then, in the territory indicated, there were large tracts circumstanced just as at the present hour, — tracts which the Spaniards, with all their boasted warlike strength, were unable even to *explore*, much less to subdue. One of these was that which forms the subject of our sketch, " El Gran Chaco."

Of all the tracts of wild territory existing in South America, and known by the different appellations of *Pampas*, *Paramos*, *Campos Parexis*, the *Puna*, the *Pajonal*, *Llanos*, and *Montañas*, there is none possessed of a greater interest than that of *El Gran Chaco*, — perhaps not one that equals it in this respect. It is interesting, not only from having a peculiar soil, climate, and productions, but quite as much from the character and history of its inhabitants, both of which present us with traits and episodes truly romantic.

The " Gran Chaco " is 200,000 square miles in extent, or twice the size of the British Isles. Its eastern boundary is well defined, being the Paraguay river, and its continuation the Parana, down to the point where the latter receives one of its great western tributaries, the Salado; and this last is usually regarded as the southern and western boundary of the Chaco. Northward its limits

are scarcely so definite; though the highlands of Bolivia and the old missionary province of Chiquitos, forming the water-shed between the rivers of the La Plata and the Amazonian basins — may be geographically regarded as the termination of the Chaco in that direction. North and south it extends through eleven degrees of latitude; east and west it is of unequal breadth, — sometimes expanding, sometimes contracting, according to the ability of the white settlers along it borders to maintain their frontier. On its eastern side, as already stated, the frontier is definite, and terminates on the banks of the Paraguay and Parana. East of this line — coinciding almost with a meridian of longitude — the Indian of the Gran Chaco does not roam, the well-settled province of Corrientes and the dictatorial government of Paraguay presenting a firmer front of resistance; but neither does the colonist of these countries think of crossing to the western bank of the boundary river to form any establishment there. He dares not even set his foot upon the territory of the Chaco. For a thousand miles, up and down, the two races, European and American, hold the opposite banks of this great stream. They gaze across at each other: the one from the portico of his well-built mansion, or perhaps from the street of his town; the other, standing by his humble "toldo," or mat-covered tent, — more probably, upon the back of his half-wild horse, reined up for a moment on some projecting promontory that commands the view of the river. And thus have these two races gazed at each other for three centuries, with little other intercourse passing between them than that of a deadly hostility.

The surface of the Gran Chaco is throughout of a

champaign character. It may be described as a vast plain. It is not, however, a continuation of the Pampas, since the two are separated by a more broken tract of country, in which lie the sierras of Cordova and San Luis, with the Argentine settlements already mentioned. Besides, the two great plains differ essentially in their character, even to a greater extent than do the Pampas themselves from the desert steppes of Patagonia. Only a few of the animal and vegetable productions of the Gran Chaco are identical with those of the Pampas, and its Indian inhabitants are altogether unlike the sanguinary savages of the more southern plain. The Chaco, approaching many degrees nearer to the equator, is more tropical in its character; in fact, the northern portion of it is truly so, lying as it does within the torrid zone, and presenting the aspect of a tropical vegetation. Every inch of the Chaco is within the palm region; but in its northern half these beautiful trees abound in numberless species, yet unknown to the botanist, and forming the characteristic features of the landscape. Some grow in forests of many miles in extent, others only in "clumps," with open, grass-covered plains between, while still other species mingle their graceful fronds with the leaves and branches of dicotyledonous trees, or clapsed in the embrace of luxuriant llianas and parasitical climbers form groves of the most variegated verdure and fantastic outlines. With such groves the whole surface of the Chaco country is enamelled; the intervals between being occupied by plains of rich waving grass, now and then tracts of morass covered with tall and elegant reeds, a few arid spots bristling with singular forms of *algarobia* and *cactus*, and, in some places, isolated rocky mounds, of dome

or conical shape, rising above the general level of the plains, as if intended to be used as watch-towers for their guardianship and safety.

Such are the landscapes which the Grand Chaco presents to the eye — far different from the bald and uniform monotony exhibited in the aspect of either Prairie or Pampa; far grander and lovelier than either — in point of scenic loveliness, perhaps, unequalled on earth. No wonder, then, that the Indian of South America esteems it as an earthly Elysium; no wonder that the Spaniard dreams of it as such, — though to the Spanish priest and the Spanish soldier it has ever proved more of a Purgatory than a Paradise. Both have entered upon its borders, but neither has been able to dwell within its domain; and the attempts at its conquest, by sword and cross, have been alike unsuccessful, — equally and fatally repulsed, throughout a period of more than three hundred years. At this hour, as at the time of the Peruvian conquest, — as on the day when the ships of Mendoza sailed up the waters of the Parana, — the Gran Chaco is an unconquered country, owned by its aboriginal inhabitants, and by them alone. It is true that it is *claimed*, both by Spaniard and Portuguese; and by no less than four separate claimants belonging to these two nationalities. Brazil and Bolivia, Paraguay and the Argentine Confederation, all assert their title to a slice of this earthly paradise; and even quarrel as to how their boundary lines should intersect it!

There is something extremely ludicrous in these claims, — since neither one nor other of the four powers can show the slightest basis for them. Not one of them can pretend to the claim of conquest; and far less can

they rest their rights upon the basis of occupation or possession. So far from possessing the land, not one of them dare set foot over its borders; and they are only too well pleased if its present occupants are contented to remain within them. The claim, therefore, of both Spaniard and Portuguese, has no higher title, than that some three hundred and fifty years ago it was given them by the Pope, — a title not less ludicrous than their kissing the Pope's toe to obtain it!

In the midst of these four conflicting claimants, there appears a fifth, and that is the real owner, — the "red Indian" himself. His claim has "three points of the law" in his favor, — possession, — and perhaps the fourth, too, — the power to keep possession. At all events, he has held it for three hundred years against all odds and all comers; and who knows that he may not hold it for three hundred years more? — only, it is to be hoped, for a different use, and under the influence of a more progressive civilization.

The Indian, then, is the undoubted lord of the "Gran Chaco." Let us drop in upon him, and see what sort of an Indian he is, and how he manages this majestic domain.

After having feasted our eyes upon the rich scenery of the land, — upon the verdant plains, mottled with copses of "quebracho" and clumps of the *Caranday* palm, — upon landscapes that resemble the most lordly parks, we look around for the mansions and the owners. The mansion is not there, but the owner stands before us.

We are at once struck by his appearance: his person tall, and straight as a reed, his frame muscular

his limbs round and well-proportioned, piercing coal-black eyes, well-formed features, and slightly aquiline nose, — and perhaps we are a little surprised at the light color of his skin. In this we note a decided peculiarity which distinguishes him from most other tribes of his race. It is not a *red* Indian we behold, nor yet a *copper-colored* savage; but a man whose complexion is scarce darker than that of the mulatto, and not at all deeper in hue than many a Spaniard of Andalusian descent, who boasts possession of the purest "sangre azul;" not one shade darker than thousands of Portuguese dwelling upon the other side of the Brazilian frontier.

And remember, that it is the *true* skin of the Chaco Indian we have before our view, — and not a *painted* one, — for here, almost for the first time, do we encounter the native complexion of the aboriginal, undisfigured by those horrid pigments which in these pages have so often glared before the eyes of our readers.

Of paint, the Chaco Indian scarce knows the use; or, at all events, employs it sparingly, and only at intervals on very particular and ceremonial occasions. We are spared, therefore, the describing his *escutcheon*, and a positive relief it is.

It would be an interesting inquiry to trace out the cause of his thus abstaining from a custom almost universal among his race. Why does he abjure the paint?

Is it because he cannot afford it, or that it is not procurable in his country? No; neither of these can be offered as a reason. The "annotto" bush (*Bixa orellana*), and the wild-indigo, abound in his territory; and he knows how to extract the colors of both, — for his

women do extract them, and use them in dying the yarn of their webs. Other dyewoods — a multitude of others — he could easily obtain; and even the cochineal cactus, with its gaudy vermilion parasite, is indigenous to his land. It cannot be the scarcity of the material that prevents him from employing it, — what then?

The cause is unexplained; but may it not be that this romantic savage, otherwise more highly gifted than the rest of his race, is endowed also with a truer sense of the beautiful and becoming? *Quien sabe?*

Let it not be understood, however, that he is altogether free from the "taint," — for he *does* paint sometimes, as already admitted; and it must be remembered, moreover, that the Chaco Indians are not all of one tribe, nor of one community. There are many associations of them scattered over the face of this vast plain, who are not all alike, either in their habits or customs, but, on the contrary, very unlike; who are not even at all times friendly with each other, but occupied with feuds and *vendettas* of the most deadly description. Some of these tribes paint most frightfully, while others of them go still farther, and *scarify* their faces with the indelible *tattoo*, — a custom that in America is almost confined to the Indians of the Chaco and a few tribes on the southern tributaries of the Amazon. Happily this custom is on the decline: the men practise it no longer; but, by a singular perversity of taste, it is still universal among the women, and no Chaco belle would be esteemed beautiful without a cross of bluish-black dots upon her forehead, a line of like points extending from the angle of each eye to the ears, with a variety of similar markings upon her cheeks, arms, and bosom. All this is done

with the point of a thorn, — the spine of a *mimosa*, or of the *caraguatay* aloe; and the dark purple color is obtained by infusing charcoal into the fresh and bleeding punctures. It is an operation that requires days to complete, and the pain from it is of the most acute and prolonged character, enduring until the poisoned wounds become cicatrized. And yet it is borne without a murmur, — just as people in civilized life bear the painful application of hair-dyes and tweezers.

I need not say that the hair of the Chaco Indian does not need to be dyed, — that is, unless he were to fancy having it of a white, or a red, or yellow color, — not an uncommon fancy among savages.

His taste, however, does not run that way any more than among civilized dandies, and he is contented with its natural hue, which is that of the raven's wing. But he is not contented to leave it to its natural growth. Only a portion of it, — that which covers the upper part of his head, — is permitted to retain its full length and flowing glories. For the remainder, he has a peculiar *tonsure* of his own; and the hair immediately over the forehead — and sometimes a stripe running all around above the ears, to the back of the head — is either close shaven with a sharp shell, or plucked entirely out by a pair of horn tweezers of native manufacture. Were it not that the long and luxuriant tresses that still remain, — covering his crown, as with a crest, — the shorn circle would assimilate him to some orders of friars; but, notwithstanding the similarity of tonsure, there is not much resemblance between a Chaco Indian and a brother of the crucifix and cowl.

This mode of "dressing the hair" is not altogether pe-

culiar to the Indian of the Gran Chaco. It is also practised by certain prairie tribes, — the Osage, Pawnee, and two or three others; but all these carry the "razor" a little higher up, leaving a mere patch, or "scalp-lock," upon the crown.

The Chaco tribes are beardless by nature; and if a few hairs chance to show themselves upon cheek or chin, they are carefully "wed" out. In a like fashion both men and women serve their eyebrows and lashes, — sacrificing these undoubted ornaments, as they say, to a principle of utility, since they allege that they can *see better without them!* They laugh at white men, who preserve these appendages, calling them "ostrich-eyed," — from a resemblance which they perceive between hairy brows and the stiff, hair-like feathers that bristle round the eyes of the rhea, or American ostrich, — a well-known denizen of the Gran Chaco.

The costume of the Chaco Indian is one of exceeding simplicity; and in this again we observe a peculiar trait of his mind. Instead of the tawdry and tinsel ornaments, in which most savages delight to array themselves, he is contented with a single strip of cloth, folded tightly around his loins. It is usually either a piece of white cotton, or of wool woven in a tri-color of red, white, and blue, and of hues so brilliant, as to produce altogether a pretty effect. The wear of the women scarce differs from that of the men, and the covering of both, scant as it is, is neither inelegant nor immodest. It is well adapted to their mode of life, and to their climate, which is that of an eternal spring. When cold winds sweep over their grassy plains, they seek protection under the folds of a more ample covering, with which

they are provided, — a cloak usually made of the soft fur of the "nutria," or South American otter, or a robe of the beautiful spotted skin of the jaguar. They wear neither head-dress nor *chaussure*, — neither pendants from the nose, nor the hideous lip ornaments seen among other tribes of South America; but many of them pierce the ears; and more especially the women, who split the delicate lobes, and insert into them spiral appendages of rolled palm-leaf, that hang dangling to their very shoulders. It will be observed, therefore, that among the Chaco tribes the women disfigure themselves more than the men, and all, no doubt, in the interest of *fashion*.

It will be seen that the simple dress we have described leaves the limbs and most part of the body bare. To the superficial observer it might be deemed an inelegant costume, and perhaps so it would be among Europeans, or so-called "whites." The deformed figures of European people — deformed by ages of toil and monarchical serfdom — would ill bear exposure to the light, neither would the tripe-colored skin, of which they are so commonly conceited. A very different impression is produced by the rich brunette hue, — bronze, if you will, — especially when, as in the case of the Chaco Indian, it covers a body of proper shape, with arms and limbs in symmetrical proportion. Then, and then only, does costly clothing appear superfluous, and the eye at once admits that there is no fashion on earth equal to that of the human form itself.

Above all does it appear graceful on horseback, and almost universally in this attitude does the Chaco Indian exhibit it. Scarce ever may we meet him afoot, but always on the back of his beautiful horse, — the two

together presenting the aspect of the Centaur. And probably in the resemblance he approaches nearer to the true ideal of the Grecian myth, than any other horseman in the world; for the Chaco Indians differ not only from other "horse Indians" in their mode of equitation, but also from every other equestrian people. The absurd high-peaked saddles of Tartar and Arab, with their gaudy trappings, are unknown to him, — unknown, too, the ridiculous paraphernalia, half-hiding the horse, in use among Mexicans, South-American Spaniards, and even the Indians of other tribes, — despised by him the plated bits, the embroidered bridles, and the tinkling spurs, so tickling to the vanity of other New-World equestrians. The Chaco horseman needs no such accessories to his elegance. Saddle he has none, or only the slightest patch of jaguar-skin, — spurs and stirrups are alike absent. Naked he sits upon his naked horse, the beautiful curvature of whose form is interrupted by no extraneous trappings, — even the thong that guides him scarce observable from its slightness. Who then can deny his resemblance to the centaur?

Thus mounted, with no other saddle than that described, no bridle but a thin strip of raw hide looped around the lower jaw of his horse, he will gallop wildly over the plain, wheel in graceful curves to avoid the burrows of the *viscacha*, pass at full speed through the close-standing and often thorny trunks of the palms, or, if need be, stand erect upon the withers of his horse, like a "star rider" of the Hippodrome. In this attitude he looks abroad for his enemies, or the game of which he may be in search; and, thus elevated above surrounding objects, he discovers the ostrich far off upon the plain, the large

deer *(cervus campestris)*, and the beautiful spotted roebucks that browse in countless herds upon the grass-covered savannas.

The dwelling of the Chaco Indian is a tent, not covered with skins, but usually with mats woven from the epidermis of young leaves of a palm-tree. It is set up by two long uprights and a ridge-pole, over which the mat is suspended — very much after the fashion of the *tente d'abri* used by Zouave soldiers. His bed is a hammock, swung between the upright poles, or oftener, between two palm-trees growing near. He only seeks shelter in his tent when it rains, and he prevents its floor getting wet by digging a trench around the outside. He cares little for exposure to the sun; but his wife is more delicate, and usually carries over her head a large bunch of *rhea* feathers, *à la parasol*, which protects her face from the hot scorching beams.

The tent does not stand long in one situation. Ample as is the supply which Nature affords in the wilds of the Chaco, it is not all poured out in any one place. This would be too much convenience, and would result in an evil consequence. The receiver of such a benefit would soon become indolent, from the absence of all necessity for exertion; and not only his health, but his moral nature, would suffer from such abundance.

Fortunately no such fate is likely to befall the Indian of the Chaco. The food upon which he subsists is derived from many varied sources, a few of which only are to be found in any one particular place, and each only at its own season of the year. For instance, upon the dry plains he pursues the *rhea* and *viscacha*, the jaguar, puma, and partridges; in woods and marshy places the different

species of wild hogs (peccaries). On the banks of rivers he encounters the tapir and capivara, and in their waters, fish, *utrias*, geese, and ducks. In the denser forest-covered tracts he must look for the various kinds of monkeys, which also constitute a portion of his food. When he would gather the legumes, of the *algarobias* — of several species — or collects the sugary sap of the *caraguatay*, he must visit the tracts where the *mimosæ* and *bromelias* alone flourish; and then he employs much of his time in searching for the nests of wild bees, from the honey of which and the seeds of the *algarobia* he distils a pleasant but highly intoxicating drink. To his credit, however, he uses this but sparingly, and only upon grand occasions of ceremony; how different from the bestial chicha-drinking revellers of the Pampas!

These numerous journeys, and the avocations connected with them, hinder the Chaco Indian from falling into habits of idleness, and preserve his health to a longevity that is remarkable: so much so, that "to live as long as a Chaco Indian," has become a proverbial expression in the settlements of South America.

The old Styrian monk Dobrezhoffer has chronicled the astounding facts, that among these people a man of eighty is reckoned to be in the prime of manhood; that a hundred years is accounted a common age; and that many of them are still hale and hearty at the age of one hundred and twenty! Allowing for a little exaggeration in the statements of the monk, it is nevertheless certain that the Indians of the Gran Chaco, partly owing to their fine climate, and partly to their mode of life and subsistence, enjoy health and strength to a very old age, and to a degree unknown in less-favored regions

of the world. Of this there is ample and trustworthy testimony.

The food of the Chaco Indian is of a simple character, and he makes no use either of salt or spices. He is usually the owner of a small herd of cattle and a few sheep, which he has obtained by plundering the neighboring settlements of the Spaniards. It is towards those of the south and west that he generally directs his hostile forays; for he is at peace with the riverine provinces, — Brazilian, Paraguayan, and Correntine.

In these excursions he travels long distances, crossing many a fordless stream and river, and taking along with him wife, children, tents, and utensils, in short, everything which he possesses. He fords the streams by swimming, using one hand to guide his horse. With this hand he can also propel himself, while in the other he carries his long lance, on the top of which he poises any object he does not wish should be wetted. A "balza," called "pelota," made of bull's hide, and more like a square box than a boat, carries over the house utensils and the puppies, of which there are always a large number. The "precious baby" is also a passenger by the balza. The *pelota* is propelled, or rather, pulled over, by means of a tiller-rope, held in the teeth of a strong swimmer, or tied to the tail of a horse; and thus the crossing is effected.

Returning with his plunder — with herds of horned cattle or flocks of sheep — not unfrequently with human captives, women and children, the crossing becomes more difficult; but he is certain to effect it without loss, and almost without danger of being overtaken in the pursuit.

His freebooting habits should not be censured too

gravely. Many extenuating circumstances must be taken into consideration, — his wrongs and sanguinary persecutions. It must be remembered that the hostilities commenced on the opposite side; and with the Indian the habit is not altogether indigenous, but rather the result of the principle of retaliation. He is near kindred to the *Incas*, — in fact, some of the Chaco tribes are remnants of the scattered Peruvian race, and he still remembers the sanguinary slaughter of his ancestors by the Pizarros and Almagros. Therefore, using the phraseology of the French tribunals, we may say there are " extenuating circumstances in his favor." One circumstance undoubtedly speaks trumpet-tongued for the Chaco Indian; and that is, he does not *torture* his captives, even when *white* men have fallen into his hands! As to the captive women and children, their treatment is rather gentle than otherwise; in fact, they are adopted into the tribe, and share, alike with the rest, the pleasures as well as the hardships of a savage life.

When the Chaco Indian possesses horned cattle and sheep, he eats mutton and beef; but if these are wanting, he must resort to the chase. He captures deer and ostriches by running them down with his swift steed, and piercing them with his long spear; and occasionally he uses the *bolas*. For smaller game he employs the bow and arrow, and fish are also caught by shooting them with arrows.

The Chaco Indian is the owner of a breed of dogs, and large packs of these animals may be seen around his camping-ground, or following the cavalcade in its removal from place to place. They are small creatures, — supposed to be derived from a European stock, but

they are wonderfully prolific, the female often bringing forth twelve puppies at a birth. They burrow in the ground, and subsist on the offal of the camp. They are used in running down the spotted roebuck, in hunting the capivara, the great ant-bear, *viscachas*, and other small animals. The tapir is taken in traps, and also speared, when the opportunity offers. His flesh is relished by the Chaco Indian, but his hide is of more consequence, as from it bags, whips, and various other articles can be manufactured. The peccary of two species (*dicotyles torquatus* and *collaris*) is also pursued by the dogs, and speared by the hunter while pausing to bay the yelping pack; and the great American tiger (jaguar) is killed in a like manner. The slaying of this fierce and powerful quadruped is one of the feats of the Chaco hunter, and both its skin and flesh are articles of eager demand. The latter is particularly sought for; as by eating the flesh of so strong and courageous a creature the Indian fancies his own strength and courage will be increased. When a jaguar is killed, its carcass becomes the common property of all; and each individual of the tribe must have his slice, or "griskin," — however small the piece may be after such multiplied subdivision! For the same reason, the flesh of the wild boar is relished; also that of the ant-bear — one of the most courageous of animals, — and of the tapir, on account of its great strength.

The bread of the Chaco Indian is derived, as before mentioned, from several species of mimosæ, called indefinitely *algarobias*, and by the missionary monks known as "St. John's bread." Palms of various kinds furnish edible nuts; and there are many trees in the

Chaco forests that produce luscious fruits. With these the Indian varies his diet, and also with wild honey, — a most important article, for reasons already assigned. In the Chaco there are stingless bees, of numerous distinct species, — a proof of the many blossoms which bloom as it were "unseen" in that flowery Elysium. The honey of these bees — of some of the species in particular — is known to be of the finest and purest quality. In the Spanish settlements it commands the highest price, and is very difficult to be obtained, — for the Chaco Indian is but little given to commerce, and only occasionally brings it to market. He has but few wants to satisfy, and cares not for the tinsel of the trader: hence it is that most of the honey he gathers is reserved for his own use. He searches for the bees' nest by observing the flight of the insect, as it passes back and forward over the wild parterre; and his keenness of sight — far surpassing that of a European — enables him to trace its movements in the air, and follow it to its hoard. He alleges that he could not accomplish this so well, were he encumbered with eyebrows and lashes, and offers this as one of his reasons for extracting these hirsute appendages. There may be something in what he says, — strange as it sounds to the ear of one who is *not* a bee-hunter. He finds the nest at length, — sometimes in a hollow tree, sometimes upon a branch, — the latter kind of nest being a large mass, of a substance like blotting-paper, and hanging suspended from the twigs. Sometimes he traces the insect to a subterranean dwelling; but it must be remarked that all these are different species of bees, that build their nests and construct the cells of their honeycombs each in its own

favorite place, and according to its own fashion. The bee-hunter cares not how — so long as he can find the nest; though he would prefer being guided to one built upon a species of thick octagonal cactus, known as the habitat of the bee "tosimi." This preference is caused by the simple fact — that of all the honey in the Chaco. that of the bee "tosimi" is the *sweetest.*

It is to be regretted that, with his many virtues, and his fine opportunity of exercising them, the Chaco Indian will not consent to remain in peace and good-will with all men. It seems a necessity of his nature to have an occasional shy at some enemy, whether white or of his own complexion. But, indeed, it would be ridiculous to censure him for this, since it appears also to be a vice universal among mankind; for where is the tribe or nation, savage or civilized, who does not practise it, whenever it feels bold enough or strong enough to do so? The Chaco Indian is not alone in his disregard of of the sixth commandment, — not the only being on earth who too frequently goes forth to battle.

He has two distinct kinds of enemies, — one of European, the other of his own race, — almost of his own kindred, you would say. But it must be remembered that there are several distinct tribes dwelling in the Chaco; who, although presenting a certain similitude, are in many respects widely dissimilar; and, so far from forming one nation, or living in harmonious alliance with each other, are more frequently engaged in the most deadly hostilities. Their wars are all conducted on horseback, — all cavalry skirmishes, — the Chaco Indian disdaining to touch the ground with his foot. Dismounted he would feel himself vanquished, — as much out of his element as a fish out of water!

His war weapons are of a primitive kind; they are the bow and lance, and a species of club, known in Spanish phraselogy as the "macana." This last weapon is also found in the hands of several of the Amazonian tribes, though differing slightly in its construction. The "macana" of the Chaco Indian is a short, stout piece of heavy iron-wood, — usually a species known as the *quebracha*, or "axe-breaker," which grows plentifully throughout the Paraguayan countries. Numerous species are termed "quebracha" in Spanish-American countries, as there are numerous "iron-woods." That of Paraguay, like most others that have obtained this name, is a species of ebony-wood, or lignum vitæ, — in short, a true *guaiacum*. The wood is hard, solid, and heavy almost as metal; and therefore just the very stuff for a war-club.

The macana of the Chaco Indian is short, — not much over two feet in length, and is used both for striking in the hand and throwing to a distance. It is thicker, and of course heavier, at both extremities; and the mode of grasping it is round the narrow part in the middle. The Indian youths, while training for war, practise throwing the macana, as other people play at skittles or quoits.

The *lazo* and *bolas* are both in the hands of the Chaco tribes, but these contrivances are used sparingly, and more for hunting than war. They rarely trouble themselves with them on a real war expedition.

Their chief weapons against an enemy are their long lances, — for these are far the most effective arms for a man mounted on horseback. Those of the Chaco Indian are of enormous length, their shafts being often fifteen feet from butt to barb. They use them also when

mounting on horseback, in a fashion peculiar to themselves. They mount by the right side, contrary to our European mode; nor is there the slightest resemblance in any other respect between the two fashions of getting into the saddle. With the Chaco Indian there is no putting toes into stirrups, — no tugging at the poor steed's withers, — no clinging or climbing into the seat. He places the butt of his lance upon the ground, grasps it a little above his head with the right hand, and then raising his lithe body with an elastic spring, he drops like a cat upon the spine of his well-trained steed. A word, — a touch of his knee, or other well-understood signal, — and the animal is off like an arrow.

When the Chaco Indian goes to war against the whites, his arms are those already described. He is not yet initiated into the use of guns and gunpowder, though he often experiences their deadly effects. Indeed, the wonder is that he could have maintained his independence so long, with such weapons opposed to him. Gunpowder has often given cowards the victory over brave men; but the Chaco Indian, even without gunpowder, has managed somehow or other to preserve his freedom.

When he makes an expedition against the white settlements, he carries no shield or other defensive armor. He did so at one period of his history; but experience has taught him that these contrivances are of little use against leaden bullets; and he has thrown them away, taking them up again, however, when he goes to war with enemies of his own kind.

In attacking a settlement or village of the whites, one of his favorite strategic plans is to set the houses on fire; and in this he very often succeeds, — almost cer-

tainly when the thatch chances to be dry. His plan is to project an arrow with a piece of blazing cotton fastened near the head. For this purpose he uses the strongest kind of bow, and lying upon his back, bends it with his feet. By this means a much longer range is obtained, and the aim is of little consequence, so long as the arrow falls upon the roof a house.

On going to war with a hostile tribe of his own kind and color, he equips himself in a manner altogether different. His face is then painted most frightfully, and in the most hideous designs that his imagination can suggest, while his body is almost entirely covered by a complete suit of mail. The thick hide of the tapir furnishes him with the materials for helmet, cuirass, cuisses, greaves, everything, — and underneath is a lining of jaguar-skin. Thus accoutred he is in little danger from the arrows of the enemy, though he is also sadly encumbered in the management of his horse; and were he upon a plundering expedition against the whites, such an encumbrance would certainly bring him to grief. He knows that very well, and therefore he never goes in such guise upon any foray that is directed towards the settlements.

The Chaco Indian has now been at peace with his eastern neighbors — both Spaniards and Portuguese — for a considerable length of time; but he still keeps up hostility with the settlements on the south, — those of Cordova and San Luis, — and often returns from these wretched provinces laden with booty. If he should chance to bring away anything that is of no use to him, or that may appear superfluous in his savage home, — a harp or guitar, a piece of costly furniture, or even a handsome horse, — he is not required to throw it away

he knows that he can find purchasers on the other side of the river, — among the Spanish merchants of Corrientes or Paraguay, who are ready at any time to become the receivers of the property stolen from their kindred of the south!

Such queer three-cornered dealings are also carried on in the northern countries of Spanish America, — in the provinces of Chihuahua, New Leon, and New Mexico. They are there called "cosas de Mexico." It appears they are equally "cosas de Paraguay."

BOSJESMEN, OR BUSHMEN.

PERHAPS no race of people has more piqued the curiosity of the civilized world than those little yellow savages of South Africa, known as the *Bushmen*. From the first hour in which European nations became acquainted with their existence, a keen interest was excited by the stories told of their peculiar character and habits; and although they have been visited by many travellers, and many descriptions have been given of them, it is but truth to say, that the interest in them has not yet abated, and the Bushmen of Africa are almost as great a curiosity at this hour as they were when Di Gama first doubled the Cape. Indeed, there is no reason why this should not be, for the habits and personal appearance of these savages are just now as they were then, and our familiarity with them is not much greater. Whatever has been added to our knowledge of their character, has tended rather to increase than diminish our curiosity.

At first the tales related of them were supposed to be filled with wilful exaggerations, and the early travellers were accused of dealing too much in the marvellous. This is a very common accusation brought against the

early travellers; and in some instances it is a just one. But in regard to the accounts given of the Bushmen and their habits there has been far less exaggeration than might be supposed; and the more insight we obtain into their peculiar customs and modes of subsistence, the more do we become satisfied that almost everything alleged of them is true. In fact, it would be difficult for the most inventive genius to contrive a fanciful account, that would be much more curious or interesting than the real and *bonâ fide* truth that can be told about this most peculiar people.

Where do the Bushmen dwell? what is their country? These are questions not so easily answered, as in reality they are not supposed to possess any country at all, any more than the wild animals amidst which they roam, and upon whom they prey. There is no Bushman's country upon the map, though several spots in Southern Africa have at times received this designation. It is not possible, therefore, to delineate the boundaries of their country, since it has no boundaries, any more than that of the wandering Gypsies of Europe.

If the Bushmen, however, have no country in the proper sense of the word, they have a "range," and one of the most extensive character — since it covers the whole southern portion of the African continent, from the Cape of Good Hope to the twentieth degree of south latitude, extending east and west from the country of the Caffres to the Atlantic Ocean. Until lately it was believed that the Bushman-range did not extend far to the north of the Orange river; but this has proved an erroneous idea. They have recently "turned up" in the land of the Dammaras, and also in the great Kalahari

desert, hundreds of miles north from the Orange river and it is not certain that they do not range still nearer to the equatorial line — though it may be remarked that the country in that direction does not favor the supposition, not being of the peculiar nature of a Bushman's country. The Bushman requires a desert for his dwelling-place. It is an absolute necessity of his nature, as it is to the ostrich and many species of animals; and north of the twentieth degree of latitude, South Africa does not appear to be of this character. The heroic Livingstone has dispelled the long-cherished illusion of the Geography about the "*Great-sanded level*" of these interior regions; and, instead, disclosed to the world a fertile land, well watered, and covered with a profuse and luxuriant vegetation. In such a land there will be no Bushmen.

The limits we have allowed them, however, are sufficiently large, — fifteen degrees of latitude, and an equally extensive range from east to west. It must not be supposed, however, that they *populate* this vast territory. On the contrary, they are only distributed over it *in spots*, in little communities, that have no relationship or connection with one another, but are separated by wide intervals, sometimes of hundreds of miles in extent. It is only in the desert tracts of South Africa that the Bushmen exist, — in the karoos, and treeless, waterless plains — among the barren ridges and rocky defiles — in the ravines formed by the beds of dried-up rivers — in situations so sterile, so remote, so wild and inhospitable as to offer a home to no other human being save the Bushman himself.

If we state more particularly the localities where the

haunts of the Bushman are to be found, we may specify the barren lands on both sides of the Orange river, — including most of its head-waters, and down to its mouth, — and also the Great Kalahari desert. Through all this extensive region the *kraals* of the Bushmen may be encountered. At one time they were common enough within the limits of the Cape colony itself, and some half-caste remnants still exist in the more remote districts; but the cruel persecution of the *boers* has had the effect of extirpating these unfortunate savages; and, like the elephant, the ostrich, and the eland, the true wild Bushman is now only to be met with beyond the frontiers of the colony.

About the origin of the Bushmen we can offer no opinion. They are generally considered as a branch of the great Hottentot family; but this theory is far from being an established fact. When South Africa was first discovered and colonized, both Hottentots and Bushmen were found there, differing from each other just as they differ at this day; and though there are some striking points of resemblance between them, there are also points of dissimilarity that are equally as striking, if we regard the two people as one. In personal appearance there is a certain general likeness: that is, both are woolly-haired, and both have a Chinese cast of features, especially in the form and expression of the eye. Their color too is nearly the same; but, on the other hand, the Hottentots are larger than the Bushmen. It is not in their persons, however, that the most essential points of dissimilarity are to be looked for, but rather in their mental characters; and here we observe distinctions so marked and antithetical, that it is difficult to

reconcile them with the fact that these two people are of one race. Whether a different habit of life has produced this distinctive character, or whether *it* has influenced the habits of life, are questions not easily answered. We only know that a strange anomaly exists — the anomaly of two people being personally alike — that is, possessing physical characteristics that seem to prove them of the same race, while intellectually, as we shall presently see, they have scarce one character in common. The slight resemblance that exists between the languages of the two is not to be regarded as a proof of their common origin. It only shows that they have long lived in juxtaposition, or contiguous to each other; a fact which cannot be denied.

In giving a more particular description of the Bushman, it will be seen in what respect he resembles the true Hottentot, and in what he differs from him, both physically and mentally, and this description may now be given.

The Bushman is the smallest man with whom we are acquainted; and if the terms "dwarf" and "pigmy" may be applied to any race of human beings, the South-African Bushmen presents the fairest claim to these titles. He stands only 4 feet 6 inches upon his naked soles — never more than 4 feet 9, and not unfrequently is he encountered of still less height — even so diminutive as 4 feet 2. His wife is of still shorter stature, and this Lilliputian lady is often the mother of children when the crown of her head is just 3 feet 9 inches above the soles of her feet. It has been a very common thing to contradict the assertion that these people are such pigmies in stature, and even Dr. Livingstone has done so in his

late magnificent work. The doctor states, very jocosely, that they are "not dwarfish — that the specimens brought to Europe have been selected, like costermongers' dogs, for their extreme ugliness."

But the doctor forgets that it is not from "the specimens brought to Europe" that the above standard of the Bushman's height has been derived, but from the testimony of numerous travellers — many of them as trustworthy as the doctor himself — from actual measurements made by them upon the spot. It is hardly to be believed that such men as Sparmann and Burchell, Barrow and Lichtenstein, Harris, Campbell, Patterson, and a dozen others that might be mentioned, should all give an erroneous testimony on this subject. These travellers have differed notoriously on other points, but in this they all agree, that a Bushman of five feet in height is a *tall* man in his tribe. Dr. Livingstone speaks of Bushmen "six feet high," and these are the tribes lately discovered living so far north as the Lake Nagami. It is doubtful whether these are Bushmen at all. Indeed, the description given by the doctor, not only of their height and the color of their skin, but also some hints about their intellectual character, would lead to the belief that he has mistaken some other people for Bushmen. It must be remembered that the experience of this great traveller has been chiefly among the *Bechuana* tribes, and his knowledge of the Bushman proper does not appear to be either accurate or extensive. No man is expected to know everybody; and amid the profusion of new facts, which the doctor has so liberally laid before the world, it would be strange if a few inaccuracies should not occur Perhaps we should have more confidence if this

was the only one we are enabled to detect; but the doctor also denies that there is anything either terrific or majestic in the "roaring of the lion." Thus speaks he: "The same feeling which has induced the modern painter to caricature the lion has led the sentimentalist to consider the lion's roar as the most terrific of all earthly sounds. We hear of the 'majestic roar of the king of beasts.' To talk of the majestic roar of the lion is mere majestic twaddle."

The doctor is certainly in error here. Does he suppose that any one is ignorant of the character of the lion's roar? Does he fancy that no one has ever heard it but himself? If it be necessary to go to South Africa to take the true measure of a Bushman, it is not necessary to make that long journey in order to obtain a correct idea of the compass of the lion's voice. We can hear it at home in all its modulations; and any one who has ever visited the Zoölogical Gardens in Regent's Park — nay, any one who chances to live within half a mile of that magnificent menagerie — will be very much disposed to doubt the correctness of the doctor's assertion. If there be a sound upon the earth above all others "majestic," a noise above all others "terrific," it is certainly the *roar* of the lion. Ask Albert Terrace and St. John's Wood!

But let us not be too severe upon the doctor. The world is indebted to him much more than to any other modern traveller, and all great men indulge occasionally in the luxury of an eccentric opinion. We have brought the point forward here for a special purpose, — to illustrate a too much neglected truth. Error is not always on the side of exaggeration; but is sometimes

also found in the opposite extreme of a too-squeamish moderation. We find the learned Professor Lichtenstein ridiculing poor old Hernandez, the natural historian of Mexico, for having given a description of certain fabulous animals — *fabulous*, he terms them, because to him they were odd and unknown. But it turns out that the old author was right, and the *animals exist!* How many similar misconceptions might be recorded of the Buffons, and other closet philosophers — urged, too, with the most bitter zeal! Incredulity carried too far is but another form of credulity.

But to return to our proper theme, and complete the portrait of the Bushman. We have given his height. It is in tolerable proportion to his other dimensions. When young, he appears stout enough; but this is only when a mere boy. At the age of sixteen he has reached all the manhood he is ever destined to attain; and then his flesh disappears; his body assumes a meagre outline; his arms and limbs grow thin; the calf disappears from his legs; the plumpness from his cheeks; and altogether he becomes as wretched-looking an object as it is possible to conceive in human shape. Older, his skin grows dry, corrugated, and scaly; his bones protrude; and his knee, elbow, and ankle-joints appear like horny knobs placed at the ends of what more resemble long straight sticks than the arms and limbs of a human being.

The color of this creature may be designated a yellow-brown, though it is not easy to determine it to a shade. The Bushman appears darker than he really is; since his skin serves him for a towel, and every species of dirt that discommodes his fingers he gets rid of by wiping it off on his arms, sides, or breast. The result is,

that his whole body is usually coated over with a stratum of grease and filth, which has led to the belief that he regularly anoints himself — a custom common among many savage tribes. This, however, the Bushman does not do: the smearing toilet is merely occasional or accidental, and consists simply in the fat of whatever flesh he has been eating being transferred from his fingers to the cuticle of his body. This is never washed off again — for water never touches the Bushman's hide. Such a use of water is entirely unknown to him, not even for washing his face. Should he have occasion to cleanse his hands — which the handling of gum or some like substance sometimes compels him to do — he performs the operation, not with soap and water, but with the dry dung of cattle or some wild animal. A little rubbing of this upon his skin is all the purification the Bushman believes to be needed.

Of course, the dirt darkens his complexion; but he has the vanity at times to brighten it up — not by making it whiter — but rather a brick-red. A little ochreous earth produces the color he requires; and with this he smears his body all over — not excepting even the crown of his head, and the scant stock of wool that covers it.

Bushmen have been washed. It requires some scrubbing, and a plentiful application either of soda or soap, to reach the true skin and bring out the natural color; but the experiment has been made, and the result proves that the Bushman is not so black as, under ordinary circumstances, he appears. A yellow hue shines through the epidermis, somewhat like the color of the Chinese, or a European in the worst stage of jaundice — the eye

only not having that complexion. Indeed, the features of the Bushman, as well as the Hottentot, bear a strong similarity to those of the Chinese, and the Bushman's eye is essentially of the Mongolian type. His hair, however, is entirely of another character. Instead of being long, straight, and lank, it is short, crisp, and curly, — in reality, wool. Its scantiness is a characteristic; and in this respect the Bushman differs from the woolly-haired tribes both of Africa and Australasia. These generally have "fleeces" in profusion, whereas both Hottentot and Bushman have not enough to half cover their scalps; and between the little knot-like 'kinks" there are wide spaces without a single hair upon them. The Bushman's "wool" is naturally black, but red ochre and the sun soon convert the color into a burnt reddish hue.

The Bushman has no beard or other hairy encumbrances. Were they to grow, he would root them out as useless inconveniences. He has a low-bridged nose, with wide flattened nostrils; an eye that appears a mere slit between the eyelids; a pair of high cheek-bones, and a receding forehead. His lips are not thick, as in the negro, and he is furnished with a set of fine white teeth, which, as he grows older, do not decay, but present the singular phenomenon of being regularly worn down to the stumps — as occurs to the teeth of sheep and other ruminant animals.

Notwithstanding the small stature of the Bushman, his frame is wiry and capable of great endurance. He is also as agile as an antelope.

From the description above given, it will be inferred that the Bushman is no beauty. Neither is the Bush-

woman; but, on the contrary, both having passed the period of youth, become absolutely ugly, — the woman, if possible, more so than the man.

And yet, strange to say, many of the Bush-girls, when young, have a cast of prettiness almost amounting to beauty. It is difficult to tell in what this beauty consists. Something, perhaps, in the expression of the oblique almond-shaped eye, and the small well-formed mouth and lips, with the shining white teeth. Their limbs, too, at this early age, are often well rounded; and many of them exhibit forms that might serve as models for a sculptor. Their feet are especially well-shaped, and, in point of size, they are by far the smallest in the world. Had the Chinese ladies been gifted by nature with such little feet, they might have been spared the torture of compressing them.

The foot of a Bushwoman rarely measures so much as six inches in length; and full-grown girls have been seen, whose feet, submitted to the test of an actual measurement, proved but a very little over four inches!

Intellectually, the Bushman does not rank so low as is generally believed. He has a quick, cheerful mind, that appears ever on the alert, — as may be judged by the constant play of his little piercing black eye, — and though he does not always display much skill in the manufacture of his weapons, he can do so if he pleases. Some tribes construct their bows, arrows, fish-baskets, and other implements and utensils with admirable ingenuity; but in general the Bushman takes no pride in fancy weapons. He prefers having them effective, and to this end he gives proof of his skill in the manufacture of most deadly poisons with which to anoint

his arrows. Furthermore, he is ever active and ready for action; and in this his mind is in complete contrast with that of the Hottentot, with whom indolence is a predominant and well-marked characteristic. The Bushman, on the contrary, is always on the *qui vive;* always ready to be doing where there is anything to do; and there is not much opportunity for him to be idle, as he rarely ever knows where the next meal is to come from. The ingenuity which he displays in the capture of various kinds of game, — far exceeding that of other hunting tribes of Africa, — as also the cunning exhibited by him while engaged in cattle-stealing and other plundering forays, prove an intellectual capacity more than proportioned to his diminutive body; and, in short, in nearly every mental characteristic does he differ from the supposed cognate race — the Hottentot.

It would be hardly just to give the Bushman a character for high courage; but, on the other hand, it would be as unjust to charge him with cowardice. Small as he is, he shows plenty of "pluck," and when brought to bay, his motto is, "No surrender." He will fight to the death, discharging his poisoned arrows as long as he is able to bend a bow. Indeed, he has generally been treated to shooting, or clubbing to death, wherever and whenever caught, and he knows nothing of *quarter*. Just as a badger he ends his life, — his last struggle being an attempt to do injury to his assailant. This trait in his character has, no doubt, been strengthened by the inhuman treatment that, for a century, he has been receiving from the brutal boers of the colonial frontier.

The costume of the Bushman is of the most primitive

character, — differing only from that worn by our first parents, in that the fig-leaf used by the men is a patch of jackal-skin, and that of the women a sort of fringe or bunch of leather thongs, suspended around the waist by a strap, and hanging down to the knees. It is in reality a little apron of dressed skin; or, to speak more accurately, two of them, one above the other, both cut into narrow strips or thongs, from below the waist downward. Other clothing than this they have none, if we except a little skin *kaross*, or cloak, which is worn over their shoulders; — that of the women being provided with a bag or hood at the top, that answers the naked "piccaninny" for a nest or cradle. Sandals protect their feet from the sharp stones, and these are of the rudest description, — merely a piece of the thick hide cut a little longer and broader than the soles of the feet, and fastened at the toes and round the ankles by thongs of sinews. An attempt at ornament is displayed in a leathern skullcap, or more commonly a circlet around the head, upon which are sewed a number of "cowries," or small shells of the *Cyprea moneta*.

It is difficult to say where these shells are procured, — as they are not the product of the Bushman's country, but are only found on the far shores of the Indian Ocean. Most probably he obtains them by barter, and after they have passed through many hands; but they must cost the Bushman dear, as he sets the highest value upon them. Other ornaments consist of old brass or copper buttons, attached to the little curls of his woolly hair; and, among the women, strings of little pieces of ostrich egg-shells, fashioned to resemble beads; besides a perfect load of leathern bracelets on the arms, and a like

profusion of similar circlets on the limbs, often reaching from the knee to the ankle-joint.

Red ochre over the face and hair is the fashionable toilette, and a perfumery is obtained by rubbing the skin with the powdered leaves of the "buku" plant, a species of *diosma*. According to a quaint old writer, this causes them to "stink like a poppy," and would be highly objectionable, were it not preferable to the odor which they have without it.

They do not *tattoo*, nor yet perforate the ears, lips, or nose, — practices so common among savage tribes. Some instances of nose-piercing have been observed, with the usual appendage of a piece of wood or porcupine's quill inserted in the septum, but this is a custom rather of the Caffres than Bushmen. Among the latter it is rare. A grand ornament is obtained by smearing the face and head with a shining micaceous paste, which is procured from a cave in one particular part of the Bushman's range; but this, being a "far-fetched" article, is proportionably scarce and dear. It is only a fine belle who can afford to give herself a coat of *blink-slip*, — as this sparkling pigment is called by the colonists. Many of the women, and men as well, carry in their hands the bushy tail of a jackal. The purpose is to fan off the flies, and serve also as a "wipe," to disembarrass their bodies of perspiration when the weather chances to be over hot.

The domicile of the Bushman next merits description. It is quite as simple and primitive as his dress, and gives him about equal trouble in its construction. If a cave or cleft can be found in the rocks, of sufficient capacity to admit his own body and those of his family

— never a very large one — he builds no house. The cave contents him, be it ever so tight a squeeze. If there be no cave handy, an overhanging rock will answer equally as well. He regards not the open sides, nor the draughts. It is only the rain which he does not relish; and any sort of a shed, that will shelter him from that, will serve him for a dwelling. If neither cave, crevice, nor impending cliff can be found in the neighborhood, he then resorts to the alternative of house-building; and his style of architecture does not differ greatly from that of the orang-outang. A bush is chosen that grows near to two or three others, — the branches of all meeting in a common centre. Of these branches the builder takes advantage, fastening them together at the ends, and wattling some into the others. Over this framework a quantity of grass is scattered in such a fashion as to cast off a good shower of rain, and then the "carcass" of the building is considered complete. The inside work remains yet to be done, and that is next set about. A large roundish or oblong hole is scraped out in the middle of the floor. It is made wide enough and deep enough to hold the bodies of three or four Bush-people, though a single large Caffre or Dutchman would scarcely find room in it. Into this hole is flung a quantity of dry grass, and arranged so as to present the appearance of a gigantic nest. This nest, or lair, becomes the bed of the Bushman, his wife, or wives, — for he frequently keeps two, — and the other members of his family. Coiled together like monkeys, and covered with their skin karosses, they all sleep in it, — whether "sweetly" or "soundly," I shall not take upon me to determine.

It is supposed to be this fashion of literally "sleeping in the bush," as also the mode by which he skulks and hides among bushes, — invariably taking to them when pursued, — that has given origin to the name Bushman, or *Bosjesman*, as it is in the language of the colonial Dutch. This derivation is probable enough, and no better has been offered.

The Bushman sometimes constructs himself a more elaborate dwelling; that is, some Bushmen; — for it should be remarked that there are a great many tribes or communities of these people, and they are not all so very low in the scale of civilization. None, however, ever arrive at the building of a house, — not even a hut. A tent is their highest effort in the building line, and that is of the rudest description, scarce deserving the name. Its covering is a mat, which they weave out of a species of rush that grows along some of the desert streams; and in the fabrication of the covering they display far more ingenuity than in the planning or construction of the tent itself. The mat, in fact, is simply laid over two poles, that are bent into the form of an arch, by having both ends stuck into the ground. A second piece of matting closes up one end; and the other, left open, serves for the entrance. As a door is not deemed necessary, no further construction is required, and the tent is "pitched" complete. It only remains to scoop out the sand, and make the *nest* as already described.

It is said that the Goths drew their ideas of architecture from the aisles of the oak forest; the Chinese from their Mongolian tents; and the Egyptians from their caves in the rocks. Beyond a doubt, the Bushman has borrowed his from the nest of the ostrich!

It now becomes necessary to inquire how the Bushman spends his time? how he obtains subsistence? and what is the nature of his food? All these questions can be answered, though at first it may appear difficult to answer them. Dwelling, as he always does, in the very heart of the desert, remote from forests that might furnish him with some sort of food — trees that might yield fruit, — far away from a fertile soil, with no knowledge of agriculture, even if it were near, — with no flocks or herds; neither sheep, cattle, horses, nor swine, — no domestic animals but his lean, diminutive dogs, — how does this Bushman procure enough to eat? What are his sources of supply?

We shall see. Being neither a grazier nor a farmer, he has other means of subsistence, — though it must be confessed that they are of a precarious character, and often during his life does the Bushman find himself on the very threshold of starvation. This, however, results less from the parsimony of Nature than the Bushman's own improvident habits, — a trait in his character which is, perhaps, more strongly developed in him than any other. We shall have occasion to refer to it presently.

His first and chief mode of procuring his food is by the chase: for, although he is surrounded by the sterile wilderness, he is not the only animated being who has chosen the desert for his home. Several species of birds — one the largest of all — and quadrupeds, share with the Bushman the solitude and safety of this desolate region. The rhinoceros can dwell there; and in numerous streams are found the huge hippopotami; whilst quaggas, zebras, and several species of antelope frequent the desert plains as their favorite "stamping"

ground. Some of these animals can live almost without water; but when they do require it, what to them is a gallop of fifty miles to some well-known "vley" or pool? It will be seen, therefore, that the desert has its numerous denizens. All these are objects of the Bushman's pursuit, who follows them with incessant pertinacity — as if he were a beast of prey, furnished by Nature with the most carnivorous propensities.

In the capture of these animals he displays an almost incredible dexterity and cunning. His mode of approaching the sly ostrich, by disguising himself in the skin of one of these birds, is so well known that I need not describe it here; but the *ruses* he adopts for capturing or killing other sorts of game are many of them equally ingenious. The pit-trap is one of his favorite contrivances; and this, too, has been often described, — but often very erroneously. The pit is not a large hollow, — as is usually asserted, — but rather of dimensions proportioned to the size of the animal that is expected to fall into it. For game like the rhinoceros or *eland* antelope, it is dug of six feet in length and three in width at the top; gradually narrowing to the bottom, where it ends in a trench of only twelve inches broad. Six or seven feet is considered deep enough; and the animal, once into it, gets so wedged at the narrow bottom part as to be unable to make use of its legs for the purpose of springing out again. Sometimes a sharp stake or two are used, with the view of *impaling* the victim; but this plan is not always adopted. There is not much danger of a quadruped that drops in ever getting out again, till he is dragged out by the Bushman in the shape of a carcass.

The Bushman's ingenuity does not end here. Besides the construction of the trap, it is necessary the game should be guided into it. Were this not done, the pit might remain a long time empty, and, as a necessary consequence, so too might the belly of the Bushman. In the wide plain few of the gregarious animals have a path which they follow habitually; only where there is a pool may such beaten trails be found, and of these the Bushman also avails himself; but they are not enough. Some artificial means must be used to make the traps pay — for they are not constructed without much labor and patience. The plan adopted by the Bushman to accomplish this exhibits some points of originality. He first chooses a part of the plain which lies between two mountains. No matter if these be distant from each other: a mile, or even two, will not deter the Bushman from his design. By the help of his whole tribe — men, women, and children — he constructs a fence from one mountain to the other. The material used is whatever may be most ready to the hand: stones, sods, brush, or dead timber, if this be convenient. No matter how rude the fence: it need not either be very high. He leaves several gaps in it; and the wild animals, however easily they might leap over such a puny barrier, will, in their ordinary way, prefer to walk leisurely through the gaps. In each of these, however, there is a dangerous hole — dangerous from its depth as well as from the cunning way in which it is concealed from the view — in short, in each gap there is a *pit-fall*. No one — at least no animal except the elephant — would ever suspect its presence; the grass seems to grow over it, and the sand lies unturned, just as elsewhere upon the plain

What quadruped could detect the cheat? Not any one except the sagacious elephant. The stupid eland tumbles through; the gemsbok goes under; and the rhinoceros rushes into it as if destined to destruction. The Bushman sees this from his elevated perch, glides forward over the ground, and spears the struggling victim with his *poisoned assagai*.

Besides the above method of capturing game the Bushman also uses the bow and arrows. This is a weapon in which he is greatly skilled; and although both bow and arrows are as tiny as if intended for children's toys, they are among the deadliest of weapons. their fatal effect lies not in the *size* of the wound they are capable of inflicting, but in the peculiar mode in which the barbs of the arrows are prepared. I need hardly add that they are dipped in poison; — for who has not heard of the poisoned arrows of the African Bushmen?

Both bow and arrows are usually rude enough in their construction, and would appear but a trumpery affair, were it not for a knowledge of their effects. The bow is a mere round stick, about three feet long, and slightly bent by means of its string of twisted sinews. The arrows are mere reeds, tipped with pieces of bone, with a split ostrich-quill lapped behind the head, and answering for a barb. This arrow the Bushman can shoot with tolerable certainty to a distance of a hundred yards, and he can even project it farther by giving a slight elevation to his aim. It signifies not whether the force with which it strikes the object be ever so slight, if it only makes an entrance. Even a scratch from its point will sometimes prove fatal.

Of course the danger dwells altogether in the poison. Were it not for that, the Bushman, from his dwarfish stature and pigmy strength, would be a harmless creature indeed.

The poison he well knows how to prepare, and he can make it of the most "potent spell," when the "materials" are within his reach. For this purpose he makes use of both vegetable and animal substances, and a mineral is also employed; but the last is not a poison, and is only used to give consistency to the liquid, so that it may the better adhere to the arrow. The vegetable substances are of various kinds. Some are botanically known: the bulb of *Amaryllis disticha*, — the gum of a *Euphorbia*, — the sap of a species of sumac (*Rhus*), — and the nuts of a shrubby plant, by the colonists called *Woolf-gift* (Wolf-poison).

The animal substance is the fluid found in the fangs of venomous serpents, several species of which serve the purpose of the Bushman: as the little "Horned Snake," — so called from the scales rising prominently over its eyes; the "Yellow Snake," or South African Cobra (*Naga haje*); the "Puff Adder," and others. From all these he obtains the ingredients of his deadly ointment, and mixes them, not all together; for he cannot always procure them all in any one region of the country in which he dwells. He makes his poison, also, of different degrees of potency, according to the purpose for which he intends it; whether for hunting or war. With sixty or seventy little arrows, well imbued with this fatal mixture, and carefully placed in his quiver of tree-bark or skin, — or, what is not uncommon, stuck like a coronet around his head, — he sallies forth, ready to deal

destruction either to game, animals, or to human enemies.

Of these last he has no lack. Every man, not a Bushman, he deems his enemy; and he has some reason for thinking so. Truly may it be said of him, as of Ishmael, that his "hand is against every man, and every man's hand against him;" and such has been his unhappy history for ages. Not alone have the boers been his pursuers and oppressors, but all others upon his borders who are strong enough to attack him, — colonists, Caffres, and Bechuanas, all alike, — not even excepting his supposed kindred, the Hottentots. Not only does no fellow-feeling exist between Bushman and Hottentot, but, strange to say, they hate each other with the most rancorous hatred. The Bushman will plunder a Namaqua Hottentot, a Griqua, or a Gonaqua, — plunder and murder him with as much ruthlessness, or even more, than he would the hated Caffre or boer. All are alike his enemies, — all to be plundered and massacred, whenever met, and the thing appears possible.

We are speaking of plunder. This is another source of supply to the Bushman, though one that is not always to be depended upon. It is his most dangerous method of obtaining a livelihood, and often costs him his life. He only resorts to it when all other resources fail him, and food is no longer to be obtained by the chase.

He makes an expedition into the settlements, — either of the frontier boers, Caffres, or Hottentots, — whichever chance to live most convenient to his haunts. The expedition, of course, is by night, and conducted, not as an open *foray*, but in secret, and by stealth. The cattle are stolen, not *reeved*, and driven off while the owner and his people are asleep.

In the morning, or as soon as the loss is discovered, a pursuit is at once set on foot. A dozen men, mounted and armed with long muskets (*röers*), take the *spoor* of the spoilers, and follow it as fast as their horses will carry them. A dozen boers, or even half that number, is considered a match for a whole tribe of Bushmen, in any fight which may occur in the open plain, as the boers make use of their long-range guns at such a distance that the Bushmen are shot down without being able to use their poisoned arrows; and if the thieves have the fortune to be overtaken before they have got far into the desert, they stand a good chance of being terribly chastised.

There is no quarter shown them. Such a thing as mercy is never dreamt of, — no sparing of lives any more than if they were a pack of hyenas. The Bushmen may escape to the rocks, such of them as are not hit by the bullets; and there the boers know it would be idle to follow them. Like the klipspringer antelope, the little savages can bound from rock to rock, and cliff to cliff, or hide like partridges among crevices, where neither man nor horse can pursue them. Even upon the level plain — if it chance to be stony or intersected with breaks and ravines — a horseman would endeavor to overtake them in vain, for these yellow imps are as swift as ostriches.

When the spoilers scatter thus, the boer may recover his cattle, but in what condition? That he has surmised already, without going among the herd. He does not expect to drive home one half of them; perhaps not one head. On reaching the flock he finds there is not one without a wound of some kind or other: a gash in

the flank, the cut of a knife, the stab of an assagai, or a poisoned arrow — intended for the boer himself — sticking between the ribs. This is the sad spectacle that meets his eyes; but he never reflects that it is the result of his own cruelty, — he never regards it in the light of retribution. Had he not first hunted the Bushman to make him a slave, to make bondsmen and bondsmaids of his sons and daughters, to submit them to the caprice and tyranny of his great, strapping *frau*, perhaps his cattle would have been browsing quietly in his fields. The poor Bushman, in attempting to take them, followed but his instincts of hunger: in yielding them up he obeyed but the promptings of revenge.

It is not always that the Bushman is thus overtaken. He frequently succeeds in carrying the whole herd to his desert fastness; and the skill which he exhibits in getting them there is perfectly surprising. The cattle themselves are more afraid of him than of a wild beast, and run at his approach; but the Bushman, swifter than they, can glide all around them, and keep them moving at a rapid rate.

He uses stratagem also to obstruct or baffle the pursuit. The route he takes is through the driest part of the desert, — if possible, where water does not exist at all. The cattle suffer from thirst, and bellow from the pain; but the Bushman cares not for that, so long as he is himself served. But how is he served? There is no water, and a Bushman can no more go without drinking than a boer: how then does he provide for himself on these long expeditions?

All has been pre-arranged. While off to the settlements, the Bushman's wife has been busy. The whole

kraal of women — young and old — have made an excursion half-way across the desert, each carrying ostrich egg-shells, as much as her kaross will hold, each shell full of water. These have been deposited at intervals along the route in secret spots known by marks to the Bushmen, and this accomplished the women return home again. In this way the plunderer obtains his supply of water, and thus is he enabled to continue his journey over the arid *Karroo.*

The pursuers become appalled. They are suffering from thirst — their horses sinking under them. Perhaps they have lost their way? It would be madness to proceed further. "Let the cattle go this time!" and with this disheartening reflection they give up the pursuit, turn the heads of their horses, and ride homeward.

There is a feast at the Bushman's kraal — and such a feast! not *one* ox is slaughtered, but a score of them all at once. They kill them, as if from very wantonness; and they no longer eat, but raven on the flesh.

For days the feasting is kept up almost continuously, — even at night they must wake up to have a midnight meal! and thus runs the tale, till every ox has been eaten. They have not the slightest idea of a provision for the future; even the lower animals seem wiser in this respect. They do not think of keeping a few of the plundered cattle at pasture to serve them for a subsequent occasion. They give the poor brutes neither food nor drink; but, having penned them up in some defile of the rocks, leave them to moan and bellow, to drop down and die.

On goes the feasting, till all are finished; and even if the flesh has turned putrid, this forms not the slightest objection: it is eaten all the same.

The kraal now exhibits an altered spectacle. The starved meagre wretches, who were seen flitting among its tents but a week ago, have all disappeared. Plump bodies and distended abdomens are the order of the day; and the profile of the Bushwoman, taken from the neck to the knees, now exhibits the outline of the letter S. The little imps leap about, tearing raw flesh, — their yellow cheeks besmeared with blood, — and the lean curs seem to have been exchanged for a pack of fat, petted poodles.

But this scene must some time come to an end, and at length it does end. All the flesh is exhausted, and the bones picked clean. A complete reaction comes over the spirit of the Bushman. He falls into a state of languor, — the only time when he knows such a feeling, — and he keeps his kraal, and remains idle for days. Often he sleeps for twenty-four hours at a time, and wakes only to go to sleep again. He need not rouse himself with the idea of getting something to eat: there is not a morsel in the whole kraal, and he knows it. He lies still, therefore, — weakened with hunger, and overcome with the drowsiness of a terrible lassitude.

Fortunate for him, while in this state, if those bold vultures — attracted by the *débris* of his feast, and now high wheeling in the air — be not perceived from afar; fortunate if they do not discover the whereabouts of his kraal to the vengeful pursuer. If they should do so, he has made his last foray and his last feast.

When the absolute danger of starvation at length compels our Bushman to bestir himself, he seems to recover a little of his energy, and once more takes to hunting, or, if near a stream, endeavors to catch a few

fish. Should both these resources fail, he has another, — without which he would most certainly starve, — and perhaps this may be considered his most important source of supply, since it is the most constant, and can be depended on at nearly all seasons of the year. Weakened with hunger, then, and scarce equal to any severer labor, he goes *out hunting — this time insects, not quadrupeds.* With a stout stick inserted into a stone at one end and pointed at the other, he proceeds to the nests of the white ants (*termites*), and using the point of the stick, — the stone serving by its weight to aid the force of the blow, — he breaks open the hard, gummy clay of which the hillock is formed. Unless the *aard-vark* and the *pangolin* — two very different kinds of ant-eaters — have been there before him, he finds the chambers filled with the eggs of the ants, the insects themselves, and perhaps large quantities of their *larvæ.* All are equally secured by the Bushman, and either devoured on the spot, or collected into a skin bag, and carried back to his kraal.

He hunts also another species of ants that do not build nests or "hillocks," but bring forth their young in hollows under the ground. These make long galleries or covered ways just under the surface, and at certain periods — which the Bushman knows by unmistakable signs — they become very active, and traverse these underground galleries in thousands. If the passages were to be opened above, the ants would soon make off to their caves, and but a very few could be captured. The Bushman, knowing this, adopts a stratagem. With the stick already mentioned he pierces holes of a good depth down; and works the stick about, until the sides of the

holes are smooth and even. These he intends shall serve him as pitfalls; and they are therefore made in the covered ways along which the insects are passing. The result is, that the little creatures, not suspecting the existence of these deep wells, tumble head foremost into them, and are unable to mount up the steep smooth sides again, so that in a few minutes the hole will be filled with ants, which the Bushman scoops out at his leisure.

Another source of supply which he has, and also a pretty constant one, consists of various roots of the tuberous kind, but more especially bulbous roots, which grow in the desert. They are several species of *Ixias* and *Mesembryanthemums*, — some of them producing bulbs of a large size, and deeply buried underground. Half the Bushman's and Bushwoman's time is occupied in digging for these roots; and the spade employed is the stone-headed staff already described.

Ostrich eggs also furnish the Bushman with many a meal; and the huge shells of these eggs serve him for water-vessels, cups, and dishes. He is exceedingly expert in tracking up the ostrich, and discovering its nest. Sometimes he finds a nest in the absence of the birds; and in a case of this kind he pursues a course of conduct that is *peculiarly Bushman*. Having removed all the eggs to a distance, and concealed them under some bush, he returns to the nest and ensconces himself in it. His diminutive body, when close squatted, cannot be perceived from a distance, especially when there are a few bushes around the nest, as there usually are. Thus concealed he awaits the return of the birds, holding his bow and poisoned arrows ready to salute them as soon as they come within range. By this *ruse* he is

almost certain of killing either the cock or hen, and not unfrequently both — when they do not return together.

Lizards and land-tortoises often furnish the Bushman with a meal; and the shell of the latter serves him also for a dish; but his period of greatest plenty is when the *locusts appear.* Then, indeed, the Bushman is no longer in want of a meal; and while these creatures remain with him, he knows no hunger. He grows fat in a trice, and his curs keep pace with him — for they too greedily devour the locusts. Were the locusts a constant, or even an annual visitor, the Bushman would be a rich man — at all events his wants would be amply supplied. Unfortunately for him, but fortunately for everybody else, these terrible destroyers of vegetation only come now and then — several years often intervening between their visits.

The Bushmen have no religion whatever; no form of marriage — any more than mating together like wild beasts; but they appear to have some respect for the memory of their dead, since they bury them — usually erecting a large pile of stones, or "cairn," over the body.

They are far from being of a melancholy mood. Though crouching in their dens and caves during the day, in dread of the boers and other enemies, they come forth at night to chatter and make merry. During fine moonlights they dance all night, keeping up the *ball* till morning; and in their kraals may be seen a circular spot — beaten hard and smooth with their feet — where these dances are performed.

They have no form of government — not so much as a head man or chief. Even the father of the family

possesses no authority, except such as superior strength may give him; and when his sons are grown up and become as strong as he is, this of course also ceases.

They have no tribal organization; the small communities in which they live being merely so many individuals accidently brought together, often quarrelling and separating from one another. These communities rarely number over a hundred individuals, since, from the nature of their country, a large number could not find subsistence in any one place. It follows, therefore, that the Bushman race must ever remain widely scattered — so long as they pursue their present mode of life — and no influence has ever been able to win them from it. Missionary efforts made among them have all proved fruitless. The desert seems to have been created for them, as they for the desert; and when transferred elsewhere, to dwell amidst scenes of civilized life, they always yearn to return to their wilderness home.

Truly are these pigmy savages an odd people!

THE AMAZONIAN INDIANS.

In glancing at the map of the American continent, we are struck by a remarkable analogy between the geographical features of its two great divisions — the North and the South, — an analogy amounting almost to a symmetrical parallelism.

Each has its "mighty" mountains — the *Cordilleras of the Andes* in the south, and the *Cordilleras of the Sierra Madre* (Rocky Mountains) in the north — with all the varieties of volcano and eternal snow. Each has its secondary chain: in the north, the *Nevadas* of California and Oregon; in the south, the *Sierras* of Caraccas and the group of Guiana; and, if you wish to render the parallelism complete, descend to a lower elevation, and set the Alleghanies of the United States against the mountains of Brazil — both alike detached from all the others.

In the comparison we have exhausted the mountain-chains of both divisions of the continent. If we proceed further, and carry it into minute detail, we shall find the same correspondence — ridge for ridge, chain for chain, peak for peak; — in short, a most singular equilibrium, as if there had been a design that one half of this great continent should balance the other!

From the mountains let us proceed to the rivers, and see how *they* will correspond. Here, again, we discover a like parallelism, amounting almost to a rivalry. Each continent (for it is proper to style them so) contains the largest river in the world. If we make *length* the standard, the north claims precedence for the Mississippi; if *volume of water* is to be the criterion, the south is entitled to it upon the merits of the Amazon. Each, too, has its numerous branches, spreading into a mighty "tree"; and these, either singly or combined, form a curious equipoise both in length and magnitude. We have only time to set list against list, tributaries of the great northern river against tributaries of its great southern compeer, — the Ohio and Illinois, the Yellowstone and Platte, the Kansas and Osage, the Arkansas and Red, against the Madeira and Purus, the Ucayali and Huallaga, the Japura and Negro, the Xingu and Tapajos.

Of other river systems, the St. Lawrence may be placed against the La Plata, the Oregon against the Orinoco, the Mackenzie against the Magdalena, and the Rio Bravo del Norte against the Tocantins; while the two Colorados — the Brazos and Alabama — find their respective rivals in the Essequibo, the Paranahybo, the Pedro, and the Patagonian Negro; and the San Francisco of California, flowing over sands of gold, is balanced by its homonyme of Brazil, that has its origin in the land of diamonds. To an endless list might the comparison be carried.

We pass to the plains. *Prairies* in the north, *llanos* and *pampas* in the south, almost identical in character. Of the *plateaux* or table-lands, those of Mexico, La

Puebla, Perote, and silver Potosi in the north; those of Quito, Bogota, Cusco, and gold Potosi in the south; of the desert plains, Utah and the Llano Estacado against Atacama and the deserts of Patagonia. Even the Great Salt Lake has its parallel in Titicaca; while the "Salinas" of New Mexico and the upland prairies, are represented by similar deposits in the Gran Chaco and the Pampas.

We arrive finally at the forests. Though unlike in other respects, we have here also a rivalry in magnitude, — between the vast timbered expanse stretching from Arkansas to the Atlantic shores, and that which covers the valley of the Amazon. These *were* the two greatest forests on the face of the earth. I say *were*, for one of them no longer exists; at least, it is no longer a continuous tract, but a collection of forests, opened by the axe, and intersected by the clearings of the colonist. The other still stands in all its virgin beauty and primeval vigor, untouched by the axe, undefiled by fire, its path scarce trodden by human feet, its silent depths to this hour unexplored.

It is with this forest and its denizens we have to do. Here then let us terminate the catalogue of similitudes, and concentrate our attention upon the particular subject of our sketch.

The whole *valley* of the Amazon — in other words, the tract watered by this great river and its tributaries — may be described as one unbroken forest. We now know the borders of this forest with considerable exactness, but to trace them here would require a too lengthened detail. Suffice it to say, that lengthwise it extends from the mouth of the Amazon to the foothills of the

Peruvian Andes, a distance of 2,500 miles. In breadth it varies, beginning on the Atlantic coast with a breadth of 400 miles, which widens towards the central part of the continent till it attains to 1,500, and again narrowing to about 1,000, where it touches the eastern slope of the Andes.

That form of leaf known to botanists as "obovate" will give a good idea of the figure of the great Amazon forest, supposing the small end or shank to rest on the Atlantic, and the broad end to extend along the semi-circular concavity of the Andes, from Bolivia on the south to New Granada on the north. In all this vast expanse of territory there is scarce an acre of open ground, if we except the water-surface of the rivers and their bordering "lagoons," which, were they to bear their due proportions on a map, could scarce be represented by the narrowest lines, or the most inconspicuous dots. The grass plains which embay the forest on its southern edge along the banks of some of its Brazilian tributaries, or those which proceed like spurs from the Llanos of Venezuela, do not in any place approach the Amazon itself, and there are many points on the great river which may be taken as centres, and around which circles may be drawn, having diameters 1,000 miles in length. the circumferences of which will enclose nothing but timbered land. The main stream of the Amazon, though it intersects this grand forest, does not *bisect* it, speaking with mathematical precision. There is rather more timbered surface to the southward than that which extends northward, though the inequality of the two divisions is not great. It would not be much of an error to say that the Amazon cuts the forest in halves

At its mouth, however, this would not apply; since for the first 300 miles above the embouchure of the river the country on the northern side is destitute of timber. This is occasioned by the projecting spurs of the Guiana mountains, which on that side approach the Amazon in the shape of naked ridges and grass-covered hills and plains.

It is not necessary to say that the great forest of the Amazon is a tropical one — since the river itself, throughout its whole course, almost traces the line of the equator. Its vegetation, therefore, is emphatically of a tropical character; and in this respect it differs essentially from that of North America, or rather, we should say, of Canada and the United States. It is necessary to make this limitation, because the forests of the tropical parts of North America, including the West-Indian islands, present a great similitude to that of the Amazon. It is not only in the genera and species of trees that the *sylva* of the temperate zone differs from that of the torrid; but there is a very remarkable difference in the distribution of these genera and species. In a great forest of the north, it is not uncommon to find a large tract covered with a single species of trees, — as with pines, oaks, poplars, or the red cedar (*Juniperus Virginiana*). This arrangement is rather the rule than the exception; whereas, in the tropical forest, the rule is reversed, except in the case of two or three species of palms (*Mauritia* and *Euterpe*), which sometimes exclusively cover large tracts of surface. Of other trees, it is rare to find even a clump or grove standing together — often only two or three trees, and still more frequently, a single individual is observed, separated from those of its own

kind by hundreds of others, all differing in order, genus, and species. I note this peculiarity of the tropic forest, because it exercises, as may easily be imagined, a direct influence upon the economy of its human occupants — whether these be savage or civilized. Even the habits of the lower animals — beasts and birds — are subject to a similar influence.

It would be out of place here to enumerate the different kinds of trees that compose this mighty wood, — a bare catalogue of their names would alone fill many pages, — and it would be safe to say that if the list were given as now known to botanists, it would comprise scarce half the species that actually exist in the valley of the Amazon. In real truth, this vast Garden of God is yet unexplored by man. Its border walks and edges have alone been examined; and the enthusiastic botanist need not fear that he is too late in the field. A hundred years will elapse before this grand *parterre* can be exhausted.

At present, a thorough examination of the botany of the Amazon valley would be difficult, if not altogether impossible, even though conducted on a grand and expensive scale. There are several reasons for this. Its woods are in many places absolutely impenetrable — on account either of the thick tangled undergrowth, or from the damp, spongy nature of the soil. There are no roads that could be traversed by horse or man; and the few paths are known only to the wild savage, — not always passable even by him. Travelling can only be done by water, either upon the great rivers, or by the narrow creeks (igaripes) or lagoons; and a journey performed in this fashion must needs be both tedious and

indirect, allowing but a limited opportunity for observation. Horses can scarce be said to exist in the country, and cattle are equally rare — a few only are found in one or two of the large Portuguese settlements on the main river — and the jaguars and blood-sucking bats offer a direct impediment to their increase. Contrary to the general belief, the tropical forest is not the home of the larger mammalia: it is not their proper *habitat*, nor are they found in it. In the Amazon forest but few species exist, and these not numerous in individuals. There are no vast herds — as of buffaloes on the prairies of North America, or of antelopes in Africa. The tapir alone attains to any considerable size, — exceeding that of the ass, — but its numbers are few. Three or four species of small deer represent the ruminants, and the hog of the Amazon is the peccary. Of these there are at least three species. Where the forest impinges on the mountain regions of Peru, bears are found of at least two kinds, but not on the lower plains of the great "Montaña," — for by this general designation is the vast expanse of the Amazon country known among the Peruvian people. "Montes" and "montañas," literally signifying "mountains," are not so understood among Spanish Americans. With them the "montes" and "montañas" are tracts of forest-covered country, and that of the Amazon valley is the "Montaña" *par excellence*.

Sloths of several species, and opossums of still greater variety, are found all over the Montaña, but both thinly distributed as regards the number of individuals. A similar remark applies to the ant-eaters or "ant-bears," of which there are four kinds, — to the armadillos, the

"agoutis," and the "cavies," one of which last, the *capibara*, is the largest rodent upon earth. This, with its kindred genus, the "paca," is not so rare in individual numbers, but, on the contrary, appears in large herds upon the borders of the rivers and lagoons. A porcupine, several species of spinous rats, an otter, two or three kinds of badger-like animals (the *potto* and *coatis*), a "honey-bear" (*Galera barbara*), and a fox, or wild dog, are widely distributed throughout the Montaña.

Everywhere exists the jaguar, both the black and spotted varieties, and the puma has there his lurking-place. Smaller cats, both spotted and striped, are numerous in species, and squirrels of several kinds, with bats, complete the list of the terrestrial mammalia.

Of all the lower animals, monkeys are the most common, for to them the Montaña is a congenial home. They abound not only in species, but in the number of individuals, and their ubiquitous presence contributes to enliven the woods. At least thirty different kinds of them exist in the Amazon valley, from the "coatas," and other howlers as large as baboons, to the tiny little "ouistitis" and "säimiris," not bigger than squirrels or rats.

While we must admit a paucity in the species of the quadrupeds of the Amazon, the same remark does not apply to the birds. In the ornithological department of natural history, a fulness and richness here exist, perhaps not equalled elsewhere. The most singular and graceful forms, combined with the most brilliant plumage, are everywhere presented to the eye, in the parrots and great macaws, the toucans, trogons, and tanagers, the shrikes, humming-birds, and orioles; and even in the

vultures and eagles: for here are found the most beautiful of predatory birds, — the king vulture and the harpy eagle. Of the feathered creatures existing in the valley of the Amazon there are not less than one thousand different species, of which only one half have yet been caught or described.

Reptiles are equally abundant — the serpent family being represented by numerous species, from the great water boa (*anaconda*), of ten yards in length, to the tiny and beautiful but venomous *lachesis*, or coral snake, not thicker than the shank of a tobacco-pipe. The lizards range through a like gradation, beginning with the huge "jacare," or crocodile, of several species, and ending with the turquoise-blue *anolius*, not bigger than a newt.

The waters too are rich in species of their peculiar inhabitants — of which the most remarkable and valuable are the *manatees* (two or three species), the great and smaller turtles, the porpoises of various kinds, and an endless catalogue of the finny tribes that frequent the rivers of the tropics. It is mainly from this source, and not from four-footed creatures of the forest, that the human denizen of the great Montaña draws his supply of food, — at least that portion of it which may be termed the "meaty." Were it not for the *manatee*, the great porpoise, and other large fish, he would often have to "eat his bread dry."

And now it is *his* turn to be "talked about." I need not inform you that the aborigines who inhabit the valley of the Amazon, are all of the so-called *Indian* race — though there are so many distinct tribes of them that almost every river of any considerable magnitude has a tribe of its own. In some cases a number of these

tribes belong to one *nationality;* that is, several of them may be found speaking nearly the same language, though living apart from each other; and of these larger divisions or nationalities there are several occupying the different districts of the Montaña. The tribes even of the same nationality do not always present a uniform appearance. There are darker and fairer tribes; some in which the average standard of height is less than among Europeans; and others where it equals or exceeds this. There are tribes again where both men and women are ill-shaped and ill-favored — though these are few — and other tribes where both sexes exhibit a considerable degree of personal beauty. Some tribes are even distinguished for their good looks, the men presenting models of manly form, while the women are equally attractive by the regularity of their features, and the graceful modesty of expression that adorns them.

A minute detail of the many peculiarities in which the numerous tribes of the Amazon differ from one another would fill a large volume; and in a sketch like the present, which is meant to include them all, it would not be possible to give such a detail. Nor indeed would it serve any good purpose; for although there are many points of difference between the different tribes, yet these are generally of slight importance, and are far more than counterbalanced by the multitude of resemblances. So numerous are these last, as to create a strong *idiosyncrasy* in the tribes of the Amazon, which not only entitles them to be classed together in an ethnological point of view, but which separates them from all the other Indians of America. Of course, the non-possession of the horse — they do not even know the animal

— at once broadly distinguishes them from the Horse Indians, both of the Northern and Southern divisions of the continent.

It would be idle here to discuss the question as to whether the Amazonian Indians have all a common origin. It is evident they have not. We know that many of them are from Peru and Bogota — runaways from Spanish oppression. We know that others migrated from the south — equally fugitives from the still more brutal and barbarous domination of the Portuguese. And still others were true aboriginals of the soil, or if emigrants, when and whence came they? An idle question, never to be satisfactorily answered. There they now are, and *as they are* only shall we here consider them.

Notwithstanding the different sources whence they sprang, we find them, as I have already said, stamped with a certain idiosyncrasy, the result, no doubt, of the like circumstances which surround them. One or two tribes alone, whose habits are somewhat "odder" than the rest, have been treated to a separate chapter; but for the others, whatever is said of one, will, with very slight alteration, stand good for the whole of the Amazonian tribes. Let it be understood that we are discoursing only of those known as the "Indios bravos," the fierce, brave, savage, or wild Indians — as you may choose to translate the phrase, — a phrase used throughout all Spanish America to distinguish those tribes, or sections of tribes, who refused obedience to Spanish tyranny, and who preserve to this hour their native independence and freedom. In contradistinction to the "Indios bravos" are the "Indios mansos," or "tame

Indians," who submitted tamely both to the cross and sword, and now enjoy a rude demi-semi-civilization, under the joint protectorate of priests and soldiers. Between these two kinds of American aborigines, there is as much difference as between a lord and his serf — the true savage representing the former and the demi-semi-civilized savage approximating more nearly to the latter. The meddling monk has made a complete failure of it. His ends were purely political, and the result has proved ruinous to all concerned; — instead of civilizing the savage, he has positively demoralized him.

It is not of his neophytes, the "Indios mansos," we are now writing, but of the "infidels," who would not hearken to his voice or listen to his teachings — those who could never be brought within "sound of the bell."

Both "kinds" dwell within the valley of the Amazon, but in different places. The "Indios mansos" may be found along the banks of the main stream, from its source to its mouth — but more especially on its upper waters, where it runs through Spanish (Peruvian) territory. There they dwell in little villages or collections of huts, ruled by the missionary monk with iron rod, and performing for him all the offices of the menial slave. Their resources are few, not even equalling those of their wild but independent brethren; and their customs and religion exhibit a ludicrous *mélange* of savagery and civilization. Farther down the river, the "Indio manso" is a "tapuio," a hireling of the Portuguese, or to speak more correctly, a *slave;* for the latter treats him as such, considers him as such, and though there is a law against it, often drags him from his forest-home and keeps him in life-long bondage. Any human

law would be a dead letter among such white-skins as are to be encountered upon the banks of the Amazon. Fortunately they are but few; a town or two on the lower Amazon and Rio Negro, — some wretched villages between, — scattered *estancias* along the banks — with here and there a paltry post of "militarios," dignified by the name of a "fort:" these alone speak the progress of the Portuguese civilization throughout a period of three centuries!

From all these settlements the wild Indian keeps away. He is never found near them — he is never seen by travellers, not even by the settlers. You may descend the mighty Amazon from its source to its mouth, and not once set your eyes upon the true son of the forest — the "Indio bravo." Coming in contact only with the neophyte of the Spanish missionary, and the skulking *tapuio* of the Portuguese trader, you might bring away a very erroneous impression of the character of an Amazonian Indian.

Where is he to be seen? where dwells he? what-like is his home? what sort of a house does he build? His costume? his arms? his occupation? his habits? These are the questions you would put. They shall all be answered, but briefly as possible — since our limited space requires brevity.

The wild Indian, then, is not to be found upon the Amazon itself, though there are long reaches of the river where he is free to roam — hundreds of miles without either town or *estancia*. He hunts, and occasionally fishes by the great water, but does not there make his dwelling — though in days gone by, its shores were his favorite place of residence. These happy days

were before the time when Orellana floated down past the door of his "malocca" — before that dark hour when the Brazilian slave-hunter found his way into the waters of the mighty *Solimoes*. This last event was the cause of his disappearance. It drove him from the shores of his beloved river-sea; forced him to withdraw his dwelling from observation, and rebuild it far up, on those tributaries where he might live a more peaceful life, secure from the trafficker in human flesh. Hence it is that the home of the Amazonian Indian is now to be sought for — not on the Amazon itself, but on its tributary streams — on the "caños" and "igaripes," the canals and lagoons that, with a labyrinthine ramification, intersect the mighty forest of the Montaña. Here dwells he, and here is he to be seen by any one bold enough to visit him in his fastness home.

How is he domiciled? Is there anything peculiar about the style of his house or his village?

Eminently peculiar; for in this respect he differs from all the other savage people of whom we have yet written, or of whom we may have occasion to write.

Let us proceed at once to describe his dwelling. It is not a tent, nor is it a hut, nor a cabin, nor a cottage, nor yet a cave! His dwelling can hardly be termed a house, nor his village a collection of houses — since both house and village are one and the same, and both are so peculiar, that we have no name for such a structure in civilized lands, unless we should call it a "barrack." But even this appellation would give but an erroneous idea of the Amazonian dwelling; and therefore we shall use that by which it is known in the "Lingoa geral," and call it a *malocca*.

By such name is his house (or village rather) known among the *tapuios* and traders of the Amazon. Since it is both house and village at the same time, it must needs be a large structure; and so is it, large enough to contain the whole tribe — or at least the section of it that has chosen one particular spot for their residence. It is the property of the whole community, built by the labor of all, and used as their common dwelling — though each family has its own section specially set apart for itself. It will thus be seen that the Amazonian savage is, to some extent, a disciple of the Socialist school.

I have not space to enter into a minute account of the architecture of the *malocca*. Suffice it to say, that it is an immense temple-like building, raised upon timber uprights, so smooth and straight as to resemble columns. The beams and rafters are also straight and smooth, and are held in their places by "sipos" (tough creeping plants), which are whipped around the joints with a neatness and compactness equal to that used in the rigging of a ship. The roof is a thatch of palm-leaves, laid on with great regularity, and brought very low down at the eaves, so as to give to the whole structure the appearance of a gigantic beehive. The walls are built of split palms or bamboos, placed so closely together as to be impervious to either bullet or arrows.

The plan is a parallelogram, with a semicircle at one end; and the building is large enough to accommodate the whole community, often numbering more than a hundred individuals. On grand festive occasions several neighboring communities can find room enough in it — even for dancing — and three or four hundred individuals

not unfrequently assemble under the roof of a single *malocca*.

Inside the arrangements are curious. There is a wide hall or avenue in the middle — that extends from end to end throughout the whole length of the parallelogram — and on both sides of the hall is a row of partitions, separated from each other by split palms or canes, closely placed. Each of these sections is the abode of a family, and the place of deposit for the hammocks, clay pots, calabash-cups, dishes, baskets, weapons, and ornaments, which are the private property of each. The hall is used for the larger cooking utensils — such as the great clay ovens and pans for baking the cassava, and boiling the *caxire* or *chicha*. This is also a neutral ground, where the children play, and where the dancing is done on the occasion of grand "balls" and other ceremonial festivals.

The common doorway is in the gable end, and is six feet wide by ten in height. It remains open during the day, but is closed at night by a mat of palm fibre suspended from the top. There is another and smaller doorway at the semicircular end; but this is for the private use of the chief, who appropriates the whole section of the semicircle to himself and his family.

Of course the above is only the general outline of a *malocca*. A more particular description would not answer for that of all the tribes of the Amazon. Among different communities, and in different parts of the Montaña, the *malocco* varies in size, shape, and the materials of which it is built; and there are some tribes who live in separate huts. These exceptions, however, are few, and as a general thing, that above described is the style

of habitation throughout the whole Montaña, from the confines of Peru to the shores of the Atlantic. North and south we encounter this singular house-village, from the head-waters of the Rio Negro to the highlands of Brazil.

Most of the Amazonian tribes follow agriculture, and understood the art of tillage before the coming of the Spaniards. They practise it, however, to a very limited extent. They cultivate a little manioc, and know how to manufacture it into *farinha* or *cassava* bread. They plant the *musaceæ* and yam, and understand the distillation of various drinks, both from the plantain and several kinds of palms. They can make pottery from clay, — shaping it into various forms, neither rude nor inelegant, — and from the trees and parasitical twiners that surround their dwellings, they manufacture an endless variety of neat implements and utensils.

Their canoes are hollow trunks of trees sufficiently well shaped, and admirably adapted to their mode of travelling — which is almost exclusively by water, by the numerous *caños* and *igaripes*, which are the roads and paths of their country — often as narrow and intri cate as paths by land.

The Indians of the tropic forest dress in the very lightest costume. Of course each tribe has its own fashion; but a mere belt of cotton cloth, or the inner bark of a tree, passed round the waist and between the limbs, is all the covering they care for. It is the *guayucó*. Some wear a skirt of tree-bark, and, on grand occasions, feather tunics are seen, and also plume head-dresses, made of the brilliant wing and tail feathers of parrots and macaws. Circlets of these also adorn the arms and limbs. All the

tribes paint, using the *anotto*, *caruto*, and several other dyes which they obtain from various kinds of trees, elsewhere more particularly described.

There are one or two tribes who *tattoo* their skins but this strange practice is far less common among the American Indians than with the natives of the Pacific isles.

In the manufacture of their various household utensils and implements, as well as their weapons for war and the chase, many tribes of Amazonian Indians display an ingenuity that would do credit to the most accomplished artisans. The hammocks made by them have been admired everywhere; and it is from the valley of the Amazon that most of these are obtained, so much prized in the cities of Spanish and Portuguese America. They are the special manufacture of the women, the men only employing their mechanical skill on their weapons.

The hammock, "rede," or "maqueira," is manufactured out of strings obtained from the young leaves of several species of palms. The *astrocaryum*, or "tucum" palm furnishes this cordage, but a still better quality is obtained from the "miriti" (*Mauritia flexuosa*). The unopened leaf, which forms a thick pointed column growing up out of the crown of the tree, is cut off at the base, and this being pulled apart, is shaken dexterously until the tender leaflets fall out. These being stripped of their outer covering, leave behind a thin tissue of a pale-yellowish color which is the fibre for making the cordage. After being tied in bundles this fibre is left awhile to dry, and is then twisted by being rolled between the hand and the hip or thigh. The women perform this process with great dexterity. Taking two strands of fibre between

the forefinger and thumb of the left hand, they lay them separated a little along the thigh; a roll downward gives them a twist, and then being adroitly brought together, a roll upwards completes the making of the cord. Fifty fathoms in a day is considered a good day's spinning. The cords are afterwards dyed of various colors, to render them more ornamental when woven into the maqueira.

The making of this is a simple process. Two horizontal rods are placed at about seven feet apart, over which the cord is passed some fifty or sixty times, thus forming the "woof." The warp is then worked in by knotting the cross strings at equal distances apart, until there are enough. Two strong cords are then inserted where the rods pass through, and these being firmly looped, so as to draw all the parallel strings together, the rod is pulled out, and the hammock is ready to be used.

Of course, with very fine "redes," and those intended to be disposed of to the traders, much pains are taken in the selection of the materials, the dyeing the cord, and the weaving it into the hammock. Sometimes very expensive articles are made ornamented with the brilliant feathers of birds cunningly woven among the meshes and along the borders.

Besides making the hammock, which is the universal couch of the Amazonian Indian, the women also manufacture a variety of beautiful baskets. Many species of palms and *calamus* supply them with materials for this purpose, one of the best being the "Iu" palm (*Astrocaryum acaule*). They also make many implements and utensils, some for cultivating the plantains, melons, and *manioc* root, and others for manufacturing the last-named

vegetable into their favorite "farinha" (*cassava*). The Indians understood how to separate the poisonous juice of this valuable root from its wholesome farina before the arrival of white men among them; and the process by which they accomplish this purpose has remained without change up to the present hour, in fact, it is almost the same as that practised by the Spaniards and Portuguese, who simply adopted the Indian method. The work is performed by the women, and thus: the roots are brought home from the manioc "patch" in baskets, and then washed and peeled. The peeling is usually performed by the teeth; after that the roots are grated, the grater being a large wooden slab about three feet long, a foot wide, a little hollowed out, and the hollow part covered all over with sharp pieces of quartz set in regular diamond-shaped patterns. Sometime a cheaper grater is obtained by using the aërial root of the pashiuba palm (*Iriartea exhorhiza*), which, being thickly covered over with hard spinous protuberances, serves admirably for the purpose.

The grated pulp is next placed to dry upon a sieve, made of the rind of a water-plant, and is afterwards put into a long elastic cylinder-shaped basket or net, of the bark of the "jacitara" palm (*Desmoncus macroacanthus*). This is the *tipiti;* and at its lower end there is a strong loop, through which a stout pole is passed; while the *tipiti* itself, when filled with pulp, is hung up to the branch of a tree, or to a firm peg in the wall. One end of the pole is then rested against some projecting point, that serves as a fulcrum, while the Indian woman, having seated herself upon the other end, with her infant in her arms, or perhaps some work in her

hands acts as the lever power. Her weight draws the sides of the *tipiti* together, until it assumes the form of an inverted cone; and thus the juice is gradually pressed out of the pulp, and drops into a vessel placed underneath to receive it. The mother must be careful that the little imp does not escape from under her eye, and perchance quench its thirst out of the vessel below. If such an accident were to take place, in a very few minutes she would have to grieve for a lost child; since the sap of the manioc root, the variety most cultivated by the Indians, is a deadly poison. This is the "yucca amarga," or bitter manioc; the "yucca dulce," or sweet kind, being quite innoxious, even if eaten in its raw state.

The remainder of the process consists in placing the grated pulp — now sufficiently dry — on a large pan or oven, and submitting it to the action of the fire. It is then thought sufficiently good for Indian use; but much of it is afterwards prepared for commerce, under different names, and sold as *semonilla* (erroneously called *semolina*), sago, and even as arrowroot.

At the bottom of that poisonous tub, a sediment has all the while been forming. That is the *starch* of the manioc root — the *tapioca* of commerce: of course that is not thrown away.

The men of the tropic forest spend their lives in doing very little. They are idle and not much disposed to work — only when war or the chase calls them forth do they throw aside for awhile their indolent habit, and exhibit a little activity.

They hunt with the bow and arrow, and fish with a barpoon spear, nets, and sometimes by poisoning the

water with the juice of a vine called barbasco. The "peixe boy," "vaca marina," or "manatee," — all three names being synonymes — is one of the chief animals of their pursuit. All the waters of the Amazon valley abound with manatees, probably of several species, and these large creatures are captured by the harpoon, just as seals or walrus are taken. Porpoises also frequent the South-American rivers and large fresh-water fish of numerous species. The game hunted by the Amazonian Indians can scarcely be termed noble. We have seen that the large *mammalia* are few, and thinly distributed in the tropical forest. With the exception of the jaguar and peccary, the chase is limited to small quadrupeds — as the capibara, the paca, agouti — to many kinds of monkeys, and an immense variety of birds. The monkey is the most common game, and is not only eaten by all the Amazonian Indians, but by most of them considered as the choicest of food.

In procuring their game the hunters sometimes use the common bow and arrow, but most of the tribes are in possession of a weapon which they prefer to all others for this particular purpose. It is an implement of death so original in its character and so singular in its construction as to deserve a special and minute description.

The weapon I allude to is the "blow-gun," called "pucuna" by the Indians themselves, "gravitana" by the Spaniards, and "cerbatana" by the Portuguese of Brazil.

When the Amazonian Indian wishes to manufacture for himself a *pucuna* he goes out into the forest and searches for two tall, straight stems of the "pashiuba miri" palm (*Iriartea setigera*). These he requires of

such thickness that one can be contained within the other. Having found what he wants, he cuts both down and carries them home to his molocca. Neither of them is of such dimensions as to render this either impossible or difficult.

He now takes a long slender rod — already prepared for the purpose — and with this pushes out the pith from both stems, just as boys do when preparing their pop-guns from the stems of the elder-tree. The rod thus used is obtained from another species of *Iriartea* palm, of which the wood is very hard and tough. A little tuft of fern-root, fixed upon the end of the rod, is then drawn backward and forward through the tubes, until both are cleared of any pith which may have adhered to the interior; and both are polished by this process to the smoothness of ivory. The palm of smaller diameter, being scraped to a proper size, is now inserted into the tube of the larger, the object being to correct any crookedness in either, should there be such; and if this does not succeed, both are whipped to some straight beam or post, and thus left till they become straight. One end of the bore, from the nature of the tree, is always smaller than the other; and to this end is fitted a mouth-piece of two peccary tusks to concentrate the breath of the hunter when blowing into the tube. The other end is the muzzle; and near this, on the top, a sight is placed, usually a tooth of the "paca" or some other rodent animal. This sight is glued on with a gum which another tropic tree furnishes. Over the outside, when desirous of giving the weapon an ornamental finish, the maker winds spirally a shining creeper, and then the *pucana* is ready for action.

Sometimes only a single shank of palm is used, and instead of the pith being pushed out, the stem is split into two equal parts throughout its whole extent. The heart substance being then removed, the two pieces are brought together, like the two divisions of a cedarwood pencil, and tightly bound with a sipo.

The *pucuna* is usually about an inch and a half in diameter at the thickest end, and the bore about equal to that of a pistol of ordinary calibre. In length, however, the weapon varies from eight to twelve feet.

This singular instrument is designed, not for propelling a bullet, but an arrow; but as this arrow differs altogether from the common kind it also needs to be described.

The blow-gun arrow is about fifteen or eighteen inches long, and is made of a piece of split bamboo; but when the "patawa" palm can be found, this tree furnishes a still better material, in the long spines that grow out from the sheathing bases of its leaves. These are 18 inches in length, of a black color, flattish though perfectly straight. Being cut to the proper length — which most of them are without cutting — they are whittled at one end to a sharp point. This point is dipped about three inches deep in the celebrated "curare" poison; and just where the poison mark terminates, a notch is made, so that the head will be easily broken off when the arrow is in the wound. Near the other end a little soft down of silky cotton (the floss of the *bombax ceiba*) is twisted around into a smooth mass of the shape of a spinning-top, with its larger end towards the nearer extremity of the arrow. The cotton is held in its place by being lightly whipped on by the

delicate thread or fibre of a *bromelia*, and the mass is just big enough to fill the tube by gently pressing it inward.

The arrow thus made is inserted, and whenever the game is within reach the Indian places his mouth to the lower end or mouthpiece, and with a strong "puff," which practice enables him to give, he sends the little messenger upon its deadly errand. He can hit with unerring aim at the distance of forty or fifty paces; but he prefers to shoot in a direction nearly vertical, as in that way he can take the surest aim. As his common game — birds and monkeys — are usually perched upon the higher branches of tall trees, their situation just suits him. Of course it is not the mere wound of the arrow that kills these creatures, but the poison, which in two or three minutes after they have been hit, will bring either bird or monkey to the ground. When the latter is struck he would be certain to draw out the arrow; but the notch, already mentioned, provides against this, as the slightest wrench serves to break off the envenomed head.

These arrows are dangerous things, — even for the manufacturer of them to play with: they are therefore carried in a quiver, and with great care, — the quiver consisting either of a bamboo joint or a neat wicker case.

The weapons of war used by the forest tribes are the common bow and arrows, also tipped with *curare*, and the "macana," or war-club, a species peculiar to South America, made out of the hard heavy wood of the *pissaba* palm. Only one or two tribes use the spear; and both the "bolas" and lazo are quite unknown, as such

weapons would not be available among the trees of the forest. These are the proper arms of the Horse Indian, the dweller on the open plains; but without them, for all war purposes, the forest tribes have weapons enough, and, unfortunately, make a too frequent use of them.

THE WATER-DWELLERS OF MARACAIBO.

The Andes mountains, rising in the extreme southern point of South America, not only extend throughout the whole length of that continent, but continue on through Central America and Mexico, under the name of "Cordilleras de Sierra Madre;" and still farther north to the shores of the Arctic Sea, under the very inappropriate appellation of the "Rocky Mountains." You must not suppose that these stupendous mountains form one continuous elevation. At many places they furcate into various branches, throwing off spurs, and sometime parallel "sierras," between which lie wide "valles," or level plains of great extent. It is upon these high plateaux — many of them elevated 7,000 feet above the sea — that the greater part of the Spanish-American population dwells; and on them too are found most of the large cities of Spanish South America and Mexico.

These parallel chains meet at different points, forming what the Peruvians term "nodas" (knots); and, after continuing for a distance in one great cordillera, again bifurcate. One of the most remarkable of these bifurcations of the Andes occurs about latitude 2° N. There the gigantic sierra separates into two great branches, forming

a shape like the letter Y, the left limb being that which is usually regarded as the main continuation of these mountains through the Isthmus of Panama, while the right forms the eastern boundary of the great valley of the Magdalena river; and then, trending in an eastwardly direction along the whole northern coast of South America to the extreme point of the promontory of Paria.

Each of these limbs again forks into several branches or spurs, — the whole system forming a figure that may be said to bear some resemblance to a genealogical tree containing the pedigree of four or five generations.

It is only with one of the bifurcations of the right or eastern sierra that this sketch has to do. On reaching the latitude of 7° north, this chain separates itself into two wings, which, after diverging widely to the east and west, sweep round again towards each other, as if desirous to be once more united. The western wing advances boldly to this reunion; but the eastern, after vacillating for a time, as if uncertain what course to take, turns its back abruptly on its old comrade, and trends off in a due east direction, till it sinks into insignificance upon the promontory of Paria.

The whole mass of the sierra, however, has not been of one mind; for, at the time of its indecision, a large spur detaches itself from the main body, and sweeps round, as if to carry out the union with the left wing advancing from the west. Although they get within sight of each other, they are not permitted to meet, — both ending abruptly before the circle is completed, and forming a figure bearing a very exact resemblance to the shoe of a racehorse. Within this curving boundary is enclosed a vast valley, — as large as the whole of

Ireland, — the central portion of which, and occupying about one third of its whole extent, is a sheet of water, known from the days of the discovery of America, as the *Lake of Maracaibo.*

It obtained this appellation from the name of an Indian cazique, who was met upon its shores by the first discoverers; but although this lake was known to the earliest explorers of the New World, — although it lies contiguous to many colonial settlements both on the mainland and the islands of the Caribbean Sea, — the lake itself, and the vast territory that surrounds it, remain almost as unknown and obscure as if they were situated among the central deserts of Africa.

And yet the valley of Maracaibo is one of the most interesting portions of the globe, — interesting not only as a *terra incognita*, but on account of the diversified nature of its scenery and productions. It possesses a *fauna* of a peculiar kind, and its *flora* is one of the richest in the world, not surpassed, — perhaps not equalled, — by that of any other portion of the torrid zone. To give a list of its vegetable productions would be to enumerate almost every species belonging to tropical America. Here are found the well-known medicinal plants, — the sassafras and sarsaparilla, guaiacum, copaiva, cinchona, and cuspa, or *Cortex Angosturæ;* here are the deadly poisons of *barbasco* and *mavacure*, and alongside them the remedies of the "palo sano," and *mikania guaco.* Here likewise grow plants and trees producing those well-known dyes of commerce, the blue indigo, the red arnotto, the lake-colored chica, the brazilletto, and dragon's-blood; and above all, those woods of red, gold, and ebon tints, so precious in the eyes of the cabinet and musical-instrument makers of Europe.

Yet, strange to say, these rich resources lie, like treasures buried in the bowels of the earth, or gems at the bottom of the sea, still undeveloped. A few small lumbering establishments near the entrance of the lake, — here and there a miserable village, supported by a little coast commerce in dye-woods, or cuttings of ebony, — now and then a hamlet of fishermen, — a "hato" of goats and sheep; and at wider intervals, a "ganaderia" of cattle, or a plantation of cocoa-trees (*cocale*), furnish the only evidence that man has asserted his dominion over this interesting region. These settlements, however, are sparsely distributed, and widely distant from one another. Between them stretch broad savannas and forests, — vast tracts, untilled and even unexplored, — a very wilderness, but a wilderness rich in natural resources.

The Lake of Maracaibo is often, though erroneously, described as an arm of the sea. This description only applies to the *Gulf of Maracaibo*, which is in reality a portion of the Caribbean Sea. The lake itself is altogether different, and is a true fresh-water lake, separated from the gulf by a narrow neck or strait. Within this strait — called "boca," or mouth — the salt water does not extend, except during very high tides or after long-continued *nortes* (north winds), which have the effect of driving the sea-water up into the lake, and imparting to some portions of it a saline or brackish taste. This, however, is only occasional and of temporary continuance; and the waters of the lake, supplied by a hundred streams from the horseshoe sierra that surrounds it, soon return to their normal character of freshness.

The shape of Lake Maracaibo is worthy of remark.

The main body of its surface is of oval outline, — the longer diameter running north and south, — but taken in connection with the straits which communicate with the outer gulf, it assumes a shape somewhat like that of a Jew's-harp, or rather of a kind of guitar, most in use among Spanish Americans, and known under the name of "mandolin" (or "bandolon"). To this instrument do the natives sometimes compare it.

Another peculiarity of Lake Maracaibo, is the extreme shallowness of the water along its shores. It is deep enough towards the middle part; but at many points around the shore, a man may wade for miles into the water, without getting beyond his depth. This peculiarity arises from the formation of the valley in which it is situated. Only a few spurs of the sierras that surround it approach near the edge of the lake. Generally from the bases of the mountains, the land slopes with a very gentle declination, — so slight as to have the appearance of a perfectly horizontal plain, — and this is continued for a great way under the surface of the water. Strange enough, however, after getting to a certain distance from the shore, the shoal water ends as abruptly as the escarpment of a cliff, and a depth almost unfathomable succeeds, — as if the central part of the lake was a vast subaqueous ravine, bounded on both sides by precipitous cliffs. Such, in reality, is it believed to be.

A singular phenomenon is observed in the Lake Maracaibo, which, since the days of Columbus, has not only puzzled the curious, but also the learned and scientific, who have unsuccessfully attempted to explain it. This phenomenon consists in the appearance of a remarkable light, which shows itself in the middle of the night, and

at a particular part of the lake, near its southern extremity. This light bears some resemblance to the *ignis fatuus* of our own marshes; and most probably is a phosphorescence of a similar nature, though on a much grander scale, — since it is visible at a vast distance across the open water. As it is seen universally in the same direction, and appears fixed in one place, it serves as a beacon for the fishermen and dye-wood traders who navigate the waters of the lake, — its longitude being precisely that of the straits leading outward to the gulf. Vessels that have strayed from their course, often regulate their reckoning by the mysterious "Farol de Maracaibo" (Lantern of Maracaibo), — for by this name is the natural beacon known to the mariners of the lake.

Various explanations have been offered to account for this singular phenomenon, but none seem to explain it in a satisfactory manner. It appears to be produced by the exhalations that arise from an extensive marshy tract lying around the mouth of the river Zulia, and above which it universally shows itself. The atmosphere in this quarter is usually hotter than elsewhere, and supposed to be highly charged with electricity; but whatever may be the chemical process which produces the illumination, it acts in a perfectly silent manner. No one has ever observed any explosion to proceed from it, or the slightest sound connected with its occurrence.

Of all the ideas suggested by the mention of Lake Maracaibo, perhaps none are so interesting as those that relate to its native inhabitants, whose peculiar habits and modes of life not only astonished the early navigators, but eventually gave its name to the lake itself, and to the extensive province in which it is situated. When

the Spanish discoverers, sailing around the shores of the gulf, arrived near the entrance of Lake Maracaibo, they saw, to their amazement, not only single houses, but whole villages, apparently floating upon the water! On approaching nearer, they perceived that these houses were raised some feet above the surface, and supported by posts or piles driven into the mud at the bottom. The idea of Venice — that city built upon the sea, to which they had been long accustomed — was suggested by these *superaqueous* habitations; and the name of *Venezuela* (Little Venice) was at once bestowed upon the coast, and afterwards applied to the whole province now known as the Republic of Venezuela.

Though the "water villages" then observed have long since disappeared, many others of a similar kind were afterwards discovered in Lake Maracaibo itself, some of which are in existence to the present day. Besides here and there an isolated habitation, situated in some bay or "laguna," there are four principal villages upon this plan still in existence, each containing from fifty to a hundred habitations. The inhabitants of some of these villages have been "Christianized," that is, have submitted to the teaching of the Spanish missionaries; and one in particular is distinguished by having its little church — a regular *water* church — in the centre, built upon piles, just as the rest of the houses are, and only differing from the common dwellings in being larger and of a somewhat more pretentious style. From the belfry of this curious ecclesiastical edifice a brazen bell may be heard at morn and eve tolling the "oracion" and "vespers," and declaring over the wide waters of the lake that the authority of

the Spanish monk has replaced the power of the cazique among the Indians of the Lake Maracaibo. Not to all sides of the lake, however, has the cross extended its conquest. Along its western shore roams the fierce unconquered Goajiro, who, a true warrior, still maintains his independence; and even encroaches upon the usurped possessions both of monk and "militario."

The *water-dweller*, however, although of kindred race with the Goajiro, is very different, both in his disposition and habits of life. He is altogether a man of peace, and might almost be termed a civilized being, — that is, he follows a regular industrial calling, by which he subsists. This is the calling of a fisherman, and in no part of the world could he follow it with more certainty of success, since the waters which surround his dwelling literally swarm with fish.

Lake Maracaibo has been long noted as the resort of numerous and valuable species of the finny tribe, in the capture of which the Indian fisherman finds ample occupation. He is betimes a fowler, — as we shall presently see, — and he also sometimes indulges, though more rarely, in the chase, finding game in the thick forests or on the green savannas that surround the lake, or border the banks of the numerous "riachos" (streams) running into it. On the savanna roams the graceful roebuck and the "venado," or South-American deer, while along the river banks stray the capibara and the stout tapir, undisturbed save by their fierce feline enemies, the puma and spotted jaguar.

But hunting excursions are not a habit of the water Indian, whose calling, as already observed, is essentially that of a fisherman and "fowler," and whose subsistence

is mainly derived from two kinds of *water-dwellers*, like himself — one with fins, living below the surface, and denominated *fish;* another with wings, usually resting *on* the surface, and known as *fowl.* These two creatures, of very different kinds and of many different species, form the staple and daily food of the Indian of Maracaibo.

In an account of his habits we shall begin by giving a description of the mode in which he constructs his singular dwelling.

Like other builders he begins by selecting the site. This must be a place where the water is of no great depth; and the farther from the shore he can find a shallow spot the better for his purpose, for he has a good reason for desiring to get to a distance from the shore, as we shall presently see. Sometimes a sort of subaqueous island, or elevated sandbank, is found, which gives him the very site he is in search of. Having pitched upon the spot, his next care is to procure a certain number of tree-trunks of the proper length and thickness to make "piles." Not every kind of timber will serve for this purpose, for there are not many sorts that would long resist decay and the wear and tear of the water insects, with which the lake abounds. Moreover, the building of one of these aquatic houses, although it be only a rude hut, is a work of time and labor, and it is desirable therefore to make it as permanent as possible. For this reason great care is taken in the selection of the timber for the "piles."

But it so chances that the forests around the lake furnish the very thing itself, in the wood of a tree known to the Spanish inhabitants as the "vera," or

"palo sano," and to the natives as "guaiac." It is one of the zygophyls of the genus *Guaiacum*, of which there are many species, called by the names of "iron-wood" or "lignum-vitæ;" but the species in question is the *tree* lignum-vitæ (*Guaiacum arboreum*), which attains to a height of 100 feet, with a fine umbrella-shaped head, and bright orange flowers. Its wood is so hard, that it will turn the edge of an axe, and the natives believe that if it be buried for a sufficient length of time under the earth it will turn to iron! Though this belief is not literally true, as regards the *iron*, it is not so much of an exaggeration as might be supposed. The "palo de fierro," when buried in the soil of Maracaibo or immersed in the waters of the lake, in reality does undergo a somewhat similar metamorphose; in other words, it turns into stone; and the petrified trunks of this wood are frequently met with along the shores of the lake. What is still more singular — the piles of the water-houses often become petrified, so that the dwelling no longer rests upon wooden posts, but upon real columns of stone!

Knowing all this by experience, the Indian selects the guaiac for his uprights, cuts them of the proper length; and then, launching them in the water, transports them to the site of his dwelling, and fixes them in their places.

Upon this a platform is erected, out of split boards of some less ponderous timber, usually the "ceiba," or "silk-cotton tree" (*Bombax ceiba*), or the "cedro negro" (*Cedrela odorata*) of the order *Meliaceæ*. Both kinds grow in abundance upon the shores of the lake, — and the huge trunks of the former are also used by the water Indian for the constructing of his canoe.

The platform, or floor, being thus established, about two or three feet above the surface of the water, it then only remains to erect the walls and cover them over with a roof. The former are made of the slightest materials, — light saplings or bamboo poles, — usually left open at the interstices. There is no winter or cold weather here, — why should the walls be thick? There are heavy rains, however, at certain seasons of the year, and these require to be guarded against; but this is not a difficult matter, since the broad leaves of the "enea" and "vihai" (a species of *Heliconia*) serve the purpose of a roof just as well as tiles, slates, or shingles. Nature in these parts is bountiful, and provides her human creatures with a spontaneous supply of every want. Even ropes and cords she furnishes, for binding the beams, joists, and rafters together, and holding on the thatch against the most furious assaults of the wind. The numerous species of creeping and twining plants ("llianas" or "sipos") serve admirably for this purpose. They are applied in their green state, and when contracted by exsiccation draw the timbers as closely together as if held by spikes of iron. In this manner and of such materials does the water Indian build his house.

Why he inhabits such a singular dwelling is a question that requires to be answered. With the *terra firma* close at hand, and equally convenient for all purposes of his calling, why does he not build his hut there? So much easier too of access would it be, for he could then approach it either by land or by water; whereas, in its present situation, he can neither go away from his house or get back to it without the aid of his "periagua" (canoe). Moreover, by building on the beach, or by the

edge of the woods, he would spare himself the labor of transporting those heavy piles and setting them in their places, — a work, as already stated, of no ordinary magnitude. Is it for personal security against human enemies, — for this sometimes drives a people to seek singular situations for their homes? No; the Indian of Maracaibo has his human foes, like all other people; but it is none of these that have forced him to adopt this strange custom. Other enemies? wild beasts? the dreaded jaguar, perhaps? No, nothing of this kind. And yet it is in reality a living creature that drives him to this resource, — that has forced him to flee from the mainland and take to the water for security against its attack, — a creature of such small dimensions, and apparently so contemptible in its strength, that you will no doubt smile at the idea of its putting a strong man to flight, — a little insect exactly the size of an English gnat, and no bigger, but so formidable by means of its poisonous bite, and its myriads of numbers, as to render many parts of the shores of Lake Maracaibo quite uninhabitable. You guess, no doubt, the insect to which I allude? You cannot fail to recognize it as the *mosquito*? Just so; it is the mosquito I mean, and in no part of South America do these insects abound in greater numbers, and nowhere are they more blood-thirsty than upon the borders of this great fresh-water sea. Not only one species of mosquito, but all the varieties known as "jejens," "zancudos," and "tempraneros," here abound in countless multitudes, — each kind making its appearance at a particular hour of the day or night, — "mounting guard" (as the persecuted natives say of them) in turn, and allowing only short intervals of respite from their bitter attacks.

Now, it so happens, that although the various kinds of mosquitoes are peculiarly the productions of a marshy or watery region, — and rarely found where the soil is high and dry, — yet as rarely do they extend their excursions to a distance from the land. They delight to dwell under the shadow of leaves, or near the herbage of grass, plants, or trees, among which they were hatched. They do not stray far from the shore, and only when the breeze carries them do they fly out over the open water. Need I say more? You have now the explanation why the Indians of Maracaibo build their dwellings upon the water. It is simply to escape from the "plaga de moscas" (the pest of the flies).

Like most other Indians of tropical America, and some even of colder latitudes, those of Maracaibo go naked, wearing only the *guayuco*, or "waist-belt." Those of them, however, who have submitted to the authority of the monks, have adopted a somewhat more modest garb, — consisting of a small apron of cotton or palm-fibre, suspended from the waist, and reaching down to their knees.

We have already stated, that the water-dwelling Indian is a fisherman, and that the waters of the lake supply him with numerous kinds of fish of excellent quality. An account of these, with the method employed in capturing them, may not prove uninteresting.

First, there is the fish known as "liza," a species of skate. It is of a brilliant silvery hue, with bluish corruscations. It is a small fish, being only about a foot in length, but is excellent to eat, and when preserved by drying, forms an article of commerce with the West-Indian islands. Along the coasts of Cumana and Ma

garita, there are many people employed in the *pesca de liza* (skate-fishery); but although the liza is in reality a sea fish, it abounds in the fresh waters of Maracaibo, and is there also an object of industrial pursuit. It is usually captured by seines, made out of the fibres of the *cocui aloe* (*agave cocuiza*), or of cords obtained from the unexpanded leaflets of the moriche palm (*Mauritia flexuosa*), both of which useful vegetable products are indigenous to this region. The roe of the liza, when dried in the sun, is an article in high estimation, and finds its way into the channels of commerce.

A still more delicate fish is the "pargo." It is of a white color tinged with rose; and of these great numbers are also captured. So, too, with the "doncella," one of the most beautiful species, as its pretty name of "doncella" (young maiden) would indicate. These last are so abundant in some parts of the lake, that one of its bays is distinguished by the name of *Laguna de Doncella.*

A large, ugly fish, called the "vagre," with an enormous head and wide mouth, from each side of which stretches a beard-like appendage, is also an object of the Indian's pursuit. It is usually struck with a spear, or killed by arrows, when it shows itself near the surface of the water. Another monstrous creature, of nearly circular shape, and full three feet in diameter, is the "carite," which is harpooned in a similar fashion.

Besides these there is the "viegita," or "old-woman fish," which itself feeds upon lesser creatures of the finny tribe, and especially upon the smaller species of shell fish. It has obtained its odd appellation from a singular noise which it gives forth, and which resembles the voice of an old woman debilitated with extreme age.

The "dorado," or gilded fish — so called on account of its beautiful color — is taken by a hook, with no other bait attached than a piece of white rag. This, however, must be kept constantly in motion, and the bait is played by simply paddling the canoe over the surface of the lake, until the dorado, attracted by the white meteor, follows in its track, and eventually hooks itself.

Many other species of fish are taken by the water-Indians, as the "lebranche" which goes in large "schools," and makes its breeding-place in the lagunas and up the rivers, and the "guabina," with several kinds of sardines that find their way into the tin boxes of Europe; for the Maracaibo fisherman is not contented with an exclusive fish diet. He likes a little "casava," or maize-bread, along with it; besides, he has a few other wants to satisfy, and the means he readly obtains in exchange for the surplus produce of his nets, harpoons, and arrows.

We have already stated that he is a fowler. At certain seasons of the year this is essentially his occupation. The fowling season with him is the period of northern winter, when the migratory aquatic birds come down from the boreal regions of Prince Rupert's Land to disport their bodies in the more agreeable waters of Lake Maracaibo. There they assemble in large flocks, darkening the air with their myriads of numbers, now fluttering over the lake, or, at other times, seated on its surface silent and motionless. Notwithstanding their great numbers, however, they are too shy to be approached near enough for the "carry" of an Indian arrow, or a gun either; and were it not for a very cunning stratagem which the Indian has adopted for their capture, they might return again to their northern haunts without being *minus* an individual of their "count."

But they are not permitted to depart thus unscathed. During their sojourn within the limits of Lake Maracaibo their legions get considerably thinned, and thousands of them that settle down upon its inviting waters are destined never more to take wing.

To effect their capture, the Indian fowler, as already stated, makes use of a very ingenious stratagem. Something similar is described as being practised in other parts of the world; but in no place is it carried to such perfection as upon the Lake Maracaibo.

The fowler first provides himself with a number of large gourd-shells of roundish form, and each of them at least as big as his own skull. These he can easily obtain, either from the herbaceous squash (*Cucurbita lagenaris*) or from the calabash tree (*Crescentia cujete*), both of which grow luxuriantly on the shores of the lake. Filling his periagua with these, he proceeds out into the open water to a certain distance from the land, or from his own dwelling. The distance is regulated by several considerations. He must reach a place which, at all hours of the day, the ducks and other waterfowl are not afraid to frequent; and, on the other hand, he must not go beyond such a depth as will bring the water higher than his own chin when wading through it. This last consideration is not of so much importance, for the water Indian can swim almost as well as a duck, and dive like one, if need be; but it is connected with another matter of greater importance — the convenience of having the birds as near as possible, to save him a too long and wearisome "wade." It is necessary to have them so near, that at all hours they may be under his eye.

Having found the proper situation, which the last ex

tent of shoal water (already mentioned) enables him to do, he proceeds to carry out his design by dropping a gourd here and another there, until a large space of surface is covered by these floating shells. Each gourd has a stone attached to it by means of a string, which, resting upon the bottom, brings the buoy to an anchor, and prevents it from being drifted into the deeper water or carried entirely away.

When his decoys are all placed, the Indian paddles back to his platform dwelling, and there, with watchful eye, awaits the issue. The birds are at first shy of these round yellow objects intruded upon their domain ; but, as the hours pass, and they perceive no harm in them, they at length take courage and venture to approach. Urged by that curiosity which is instinctive in every creature, they gradually draw nigher and nigher, until at length they boldly venture into the midst of the odd objects and examine them minutely. Though puzzled to make out what it is all meant for, they can perceive no harm in the yellow globe-shaped things that only bob about, but make no attempt to do them any injury. Thus satisfied, their curiosity soon wears off, and the birds no longer regarding the floating shells as objects of suspicion, swim freely about through their midst, or sit quietly on the water side by side with them.

But the crisis has now arrived when it is necessary the Indian should act, and for this he speedily equips himself. He first ties a stout rope around his waist, to which are attached many short strings or cords. He then draws over his head a large gourd-shell, which, fitting pretty tightly, covers his whole skull, reaching down to his neck. This shell is exactly similar to the others

already floating on the water, with the exception of having three holes on one side of it, two on the same level with the Indian's eyes, and the third opposite his mouth, intended to serve him for a breathing-hole.

He is now ready for work; and, thus oddly accoutred, he slips quietly down from his platform, and laying himself along the water, swims gently in the direction of the ducks.

He swims only where the water is too shallow to prevent him from crouching below the surface; for were he to stand upright, and wade, — even though he were still distant from them, — the shy birds might have suspicions about his after-approaches.

When he reaches a point where the lake is sufficiently deep, he gets upon his feet and wades, still keeping his shoulders below the surface. He makes his advance very slowly and warily, scarce raising a ripple on the surface of the placid lake, and the nearer he gets to his intended victims he proceeds with the greater caution.

The unsuspecting birds see the destroyer approach without having the slightest misgiving of danger. They fancy that the new comer is only another of those inanimate objects by their side — another gourd-shell drifting out upon the water to join its companions. They have no suspicion that this wooden counterfeit — like the horse of Troy — is inhabited by a terrible enemy.

Poor things! how could they? A stratagem so well contrived would deceive more rational intellects than theirs; and, in fact, having no idea of danger, they perhaps do not trouble themselves even to notice the new arrival.

Meanwhile the gourd has drifted silently into their midst, and is seen approaching the odd individuals, first one and afterwards another, as if it had some special business with each. This business appears to be of a very mysterious character; and in each case is abruptly brought to a conclusion, by the duck making a sudden dive under the water, — not head foremost, according to its usual practice, but in the reverse way, as if jerked down by the feet, and so rapidly that the creature has not time to utter a single "quak."

After quite a number of individuals have disappeared in this mysterious manner, the others sometimes grow suspicious of the moving calabash, and either take to wing, or swim off to a less dangerous neighborhood; but if the gourd performs its office in a skilful manner, it will be seen passing several times to and fro between the birds and the water-village before this event takes place. On each return trip, when far from the flock, and near the habitations, it will be seen to rise high above the surface of the water. It will then be perceived that it covers the skull of a copper-colored savage, around whose hips may be observed a double tier of dead ducks dangling by their necks from the rope upon his waist, and forming a sort of plumed skirt, the weight of which almost drags its wearer back into the water.

Of course a capture is followed by a feast; and during the fowling season of the year the Maracaibo Indian enjoys roast-duck at discretion. He does not trouble his head much about the green peas, nor is he particular to have his ducks stuffed with sage and onions; but a hot seasoning of red pepper is one of the indispensable

ingredients of the South American *cuisine;* and this he usually obtains from a small patch of capsicum which he cultivates upon the adjacent shore; or, if he be not possessed of land, he procures it by barter, exchanging his fowls or fish for that and a little maize or manioc flour, furnished by the coast-traders.

The Maracaibo Indian is not a stranger to commerce. He has been "Christianized," — to use the phraseology of his priestly proselytizer, — and this has introduced him to new wants and necessities. Expenses that in his former pagan state were entirely unknown to him, have now become necessary, and a commercial effort is required to meet them. The Church must have its dues. Such luxuries as being baptized, married, and buried, are not to be had without expense, and the padre takes good care that none of these shall be had for nothing. He has taught his proselyte to believe that unless all these rites have been officially performed there is not the slightest chance for him in the next world; and under the influence of this delusion, the simple savage willingly yields up his tenth, his fifth, or, perhaps it would be more correct to say, his all. Between fees of baptism and burial, mulcts for performance of the marriage rite, contributions towards the shows and ceremonies of *dias de fiesta*, extravagant prices for blessed beads, leaden crucifixes, and images of patron saints, the poor Christianized Indian is compelled to part with nearly the whole of his humble gains; and the fear of not being able to pay for Christian burial after death, is often one of the torments of his life.

To satisfy the numerous demands of the Church, therefore, he is forced into a little action in the commercia

fine. With the water-dweller of Maracaibo, fish forms one of the staples of export trade, — of course in the preserved state, as he is too distant from any great town or metropolis to be able to make market of them while fresh. He understands, however, the mode of curing them, — which he accomplishes by sun-drying and smoking, — and, thus prepared, they are taken off his hands by the trader, who carries them all over the West Indies, where, with boiled rice, they form the staple food of thousands of the dark-skinned children of Ethiopia.

The Maracaibo Indian, however, has still another resource, which occasionally supplies him with an article of commercial export. His country — that is, the adjacent shores of the lake — produces the finest *caoutchouc*. There the India-rubber tree, of more than one species, flourishes in abundance; and the true "seringa," that yields the finest and most valuable kind of this gummy juice, is nowhere found in greater perfection than in the forests of Maracaibo. The caoutchouc of commerce is obtained from many other parts of America, as well as from other tropical countries; but as many of the bottles and shoes so well known in the india-rubber shops, are manufactured by the Indians of Maracaibo, we may not find a more appropriate place to give an account of this singular production, and the mode by which it is prepared for the purposes of commerce and manufacture.

As already mentioned, many species of trees yield india-rubber, most of them belonging either to the order of the "Morads," or *Euphorbiaceæ*. Some are species of *ficus*, but both the genera and species are too numerous to be given here. That which supplies the "bottle

india-rubber" is a euphorbiaceous plant, — the *seringa* above mentioned, — whose proper botanical appellation is *Siphonia elastica*. It is a tall, straight, smooth-barked tree, having a trunk of about a foot in diameter, though in favorable situations reaching to much larger dimensions. The process of extracting its sap — out of which the caoutchouc is manufactured — bears some resemblance to the tapping of sugar-maples in the forests of the north.

With his small hatchet, or tomahawk, the Indian cuts a gash in the bark, and inserts into it a little wedge of wood to keep the sides apart. Just under the gash, he fixes a small cup-shaped vessel of clay, the clay being still in a plastic state, so that it may be attached closely to the bark. Into this vessel the milk-like sap of the *seringa* soon commences to run, and keeps on until it has yielded about the fifth of a pint. This, however, is not the whole yield of a tree, but only of a single wound; and it is usual to open a great many gashes, or "taps," upon the same trunk, each being furnished with its own cup or receiver. In from four to six hours the sap ceases to run.

The cups are then detached from the tree, and the contents of all, poured into a large earthen vessel, are carried to the place where the process of making the caoutchouc is to take place, — usually some dry open spot in the middle of the forest, where a temporary camp has been formed for the purpose.

When the dwelling of the Indian is at a distance from where the india-rubber tree grows, — as is the case with those of Lake Maracaibo, — it will not do to transport the sap thither. There must be no delay after the cups

are filled, and the process of manufacture must proceed at once, or as soon as the milky juice begins to coagulate, — which it does almost on the instant.

Previous to reaching his camp, the "seringero" has provided a large quantity of palm-nuts, with which he intends to make a fire for smoking the caoutchouc. These nuts are the fruit of several kinds of palms, but the best are those afforded by two magnificent species, — the "Inaja" (*Maximiliana regia*), and the "Urucuri" (*Attalea excelsa*).

A fire is kindled of these nuts; and an earthen pot, with a hole in the bottom, is placed mouth downward over the pile. Through the aperture now rises a strong pungent smoke.

If it is a shoe that is intended to be made, a clay last is already prepared, with a stick standing out of the top of it, to serve as a handle, while the operation is going on. Taking the stick in his hand, the seringero dips the last lightly into the milk, or with a cup pours the fluid gently over it, so as to give a regular coating to the whole surface; and then, holding it over the smoke, he keeps turning it, jack-fashion, till the fluid has become dry and adhesive. Another dip is then given, and the smoking done as before; and this goes on, till forty or fifty different coats have brought the sides and soles of the shoe to a proper thickness. The soles, requiring greater weight, are, of course, oftener dipped than the "upper eather."

The whole process of making the shoe does not occupy half an hour; but it has afterwards to receive some farther attention in the way of ornament; the lines and figures are yet to be executed, and this is done about

two days after the smoking process. They are simply traced out with a piece of smooth wire, or oftener with the spine obtained from some tree, — as the thorny point of the *bromelia* leaf.

In about a week the shoes are ready to be taken from the last; and this is accomplished at the expense and utter ruin of the latter, which is broken into fragments, and then cleaned out. Water is used sometimes to soften the last, and the inner surface of the shoe is washed after the clay has been taken out.

Bottles are made precisely in the same manner, — a round ball, or other shaped mass of clay, serving as the mould for their construction. It requires a little more trouble to get the mould extracted from the narrow neck of the bottle.

It may be remarked that it is not the smoke of the palm-nuts that gives to the india-rubber its peculiar dark color; that is the effect of age. When freshly manufactured, it is still of a whitish or cream color; and only attains the dark hue after it has been kept for a considerable time.

We might add many other particulars about the mode in which the Indian of Maracaibo employs his time, but perhaps enough has been said to show that his existence is altogether an *oad* one.

THE ESQUIMAUX.

The Esquimaux are emphatically an "odd people," perhaps the oddest upon the earth. The peculiar character of the regions they inhabit has naturally initiated them into a system of habits and modes of life different from those of any other people on the face of the globe; and from the remoteness and inaccessibility of the countries in which they dwell, not only have they remained an unmixed people, but scarce any change has taken place in their customs and manners during the long period since they were first known to civilized nations.

The Esquimaux people have been long known and their habits often described. Our first knowledge of them was obtained from Greenland, — for the native inhabitants of Greenland are true Esquimaux, — and hundreds of years ago accounts of them were given to the world by the Danish colonists and missionaries — as also by the whalers who visited the coasts of that inhospitable land. In later times they have been made familiar to us through the Arctic explorers and whale-fishers, who have traversed the labyrinth of icy islands that extend northward from the continent of America. The Esquimaux may boast of possessing the *longest*

country in the world. In the first place, Greenland is theirs, and they are found along the western shores of Baffin's Bay. In North America proper their territory commences at the straits of Belle Isle, which separate Newfoundland from Labrador, and thence extends all around the shore of the Arctic Ocean, not only to Behring's Straits, but beyond these, around the Pacific coast of Russian America, as far south as the great mountain St. Elias. Across Behring's Straits they are found occupying a portion of the Asiatic coast, under the name of Tchutski, and some of the islands in the northern angle of the Pacific Ocean are also inhabited by these people, though under a different name. Furthermore, the numerous ice islands which lie between North America and the Pole are either inhabited or visited by Esquimaux to the highest point that discovery has yet reached.

There can be little doubt that the Laplanders of northern Europe, and the Samoyedes, and other littoral peoples dwelling along the Siberian shores, are kindred races of the Esquimaux; and taking this view of the question, it may be said that the latter possess all the line of coast of both continents facing northward; in other words, that their country extends around the globe — though it cannot be said (as is often boastingly declared of the British empire) that "the sun never sets upon it;" for, over the "empire" of the Esquimaux, the sun not only sets, but remains out of sight of it for months at a time.

It is not usual, however, to class the Laplanders and *Asiatic Arctic* people with the Esquimaux. There are some essential points of difference; and what is here

said of the Esquimaux relates only to those who inhabit the northern coasts and islands of America, and to the native Greenlanders.

Notwithstanding the immense extent of territory thus designated, notwithstanding the sparseness of the Esquimaux population, and the vast distances by which one little tribe or community is separated from another, the absolute similarity in their habits, in their physical and intellectual conformation, and, above all, in their languages, proves incontestably that they are all originally of one and the same race.

Whatever, therefore, may be said of a "Schelling," or native Greenlander, will be equally applicable to an Esquimaux of Labrador, to an Esquimaux of the Mackenzie River or Bhering's Straits, or we might add, to a a Khadiak islander, or a Tuski of the opposite Asiatic coast; always taking into account such differences of costume, dialect, modes of life, &c., as may be brought about by the different circumstances in which they are placed. In all these things, however, they are wonderfully alike; their dresses, weapons, boats, houses, and house implements, being almost the same in material and construction from East Greenland to the Tchutskoi Noss.

If their country be the longest in the world, it is also the *narrowest*. Of course, if we take into account the large islands that thickly stud the Arctic Ocean, it may be deemed broad enough; but I am speaking rather of the territory which they possess on the continents. This may be regarded as a mere strip following the outline of the coast, and never extending beyond the distance of a day's journey inland. Indeed, they only

seek the interior in the few short weeks of summer, for the purpose of hunting the reindeer, the musk-ox, and other animals; after each excursion, returning again to the shores of the sea, where they have their winter-houses and more permanent home. They are, truly and emphatically, a *littoral* people, and it is to the sea they look for their principal means of support. But for this source of supply, they could not long continue to exist upon land altogether incapable of supplying the wants even of the most limited population.

The name *Esquimaux* — or, as it is sometimes written, "Eskimo," — like many other national appellations, is of obscure origin. It is supposed to have been given to them by the Canadian voyageurs in the employ of the Hudson's Bay Company, and derived from the words *Ceux qui miaux* (those who mew), in relation to their screaming like cats. But the etymology is, to say the least, *suspicious*. They generally call themselves "Inuit" (pronounced enn-oo-eet), a word which signifies "men;" — though different tribes of them have distinct tribal appellations.

In personal appearance they cannot be regarded as at all prepossessing — though some of the younger men and girls, when cleansed of the filth and grease with which their skin is habitually coated, are far from ill-looking. Their natural color is not much darker than that of some of the southern nations of Europe — the Portuguese, for instance — and the young girls often have blooming cheeks, and a pleasing expression of countenance. Their faces are generally of a broad, roundish shape, the forehead and chin both narrow and receding, and the cheeks very prominent, though not

angular. On the contrary, they are rather fat and round. This prominence of the cheeks gives to their nose the appearance of being low and flat; and individuals are often seen with such high cheeks, that a ruler laid from one to the other would not touch the bridge of the nose between them!

As they grow older their complexion becomes darker, perhaps from exposure to the climate. Very naturally, too, both men and women grow uglier, but especially the latter, some of whom in old age present such a hideous aspect, that the early Arctic explorers could not help characterizing them as *witches*.

The average stature of the Esquimaux is far below that of European nations, though individuals are sometimes met with nearly six feet in height. These, however, are rare exceptions; and an Esquimaux of such proportions would be a giant among his people. The more common height is from four feet eight inches to five feet eight; and the women are still shorter, rarely attaining the standard of five feet. The shortness of both men and women appears to be a deficiency in length of limb, for their bodies are long enough; but, as the Esquimaux is almost constantly in his canoe, or "kayak," or upon his dog-sledge, his legs have but little to do, and are consequently stunted in their development.

A similar peculiarity is presented by the Comanche, and other Indians of the prairies, and also in the Guachos and Patagonian Indians, of the South American Pampas, who spend most of their time on the backs of their horses.

The Esquimaux have no religion, unless we dignify by that name a belief in witches, sorcerers, "Shamans," and

good or evil spirits, with some confused notion of a good and bad place hereafter. Missionary zeal has been exerted among them almost in vain. They exhibit an apathetic indifference to the teachings of Christianity.

Neither have they any political organization; and in this respect they differ essentially from most savages known, the lowest of whom have usually their chiefs and councils of elders. This absence of all government, however, is no proof of their being lower in the scale of civilization than other savages; but, perhaps, rather the contrary, for the very idea of chiefdom, or government, is a presumption of the existence of vice among a people, and the necessity of coercion and repression. To one another these rude people are believed to act in the most honest manner; and it could be shown that such was likewise their behavior towards strangers until they were corrupted by excessive temptation. All Arctic voyagers record instances of what they term petty theft, on the part of certain tribes of Esquimaux, — that is, the pilfering of nails, hatchets, pieces of iron-hoops, &c., — but it might be worth while reflecting that these articles are, in the eyes of the Esquimaux, what ingots of gold are are to Europeans, and worth while inquiring if a few bars of the last-mentioned metal were laid loosely and carelessly upon the pavements of London, how long they would be in changing their owners? Theft should be regarded along with the amount of temptation; and it appears even in these recorded cases that only a *few* of the Esquimaux took part in it. I apprehend that something more than a few Londoners would be found picking up the golden ingots. How many thieves have we among us, with no greater temptation than

a cheap cotton kerchief? — more than a few it is to be feared.

In truth, the Esquimaux are by no means the savages they have been represented. The only important point in which they at all assimilate to the purely savage state is in the filthiness of their persons, and perhaps also in the fact of their eating much of their food (fish and flesh-meat) in a raw state. For the latter habit, however, they are partially indebted to the circumstances in which they are placed — fires or cookery being at times altogether impossible. They are not the only people who have been forced to eat raw flesh; and Europeans who have travelled in that inhospitable country soon get used to the practice, at the same time getting quite cured of their *dégoût* for it.

It is certainly not correct to characterize the Esquimaux as mere *savages*. On the contrary, they may be regarded as a civilized people, that is, so far as civilization is permitted by the rigorous climate in which they live; and it would be safe to affirm that a colony of the most polished people in Europe, established as the Esquimaux are, and left solely to their own resources, would in a single generation exhibit a civilization not one degree higher than that now met with among the Esquimaux. Indeed, the fact is already established: the Danish and Norwegian colonists of West Greenland, though backed by constant intercourse with their mother-land, are but little more civilized than the "Skellings," who are their neighbors.

In reality, the Esquimaux have made the most of the circumstances in which they are placed, and continue to do so. Among them agriculture is impossible, else they

would long since have taken to it. So too is commerce; and as to manufactures, it is doubtful whether Europeans could excel them under like circumstances. Whatever raw material their country produces, is by them both strongly and neatly fabricated, as indicated by the surprising skill with which they make their dresses, their boats, their implements for hunting and fishing; and in these accomplishments — the only ones practicable under their hyperborean heaven — they are perfect adepts. In such arts civilized Europeans are perfect simpletons to them, and the theories of fireside speculators, so lately promulgated in our newspapers, that Sir John Franklin and his crew could not fail to procure a living where the simple Esquimaux were able to make a home, betrayed only ignorance of the condition of these people. In truth, white men would starve, where the Esquimaux could live in luxurious abundance, so far superior to ours is their knowledge both of fishing and the chase. It is a well-recorded fact, that while our Arctic voyagers, at their winter stations, provided with good guns, nets, and every appliance, could but rarely kill a reindeer or capture a seal, the Esquimaux obtained both in abundance, and apparently without an effort; and we shall presently note the causes of their superiority in this respect.

The very dress of the Esquimaux is a proof of their superiority over other savages. At no season of the year do they go either naked, or even "ragged." They have their changes to suit the seasons, — their summer dress, and one of a warmer kind for winter. Both are made in a most complicated manner; and the preparation of the material, as well as the manner by which it

is put together, prove the Esquimaux women — for they are alike the tailors and dressmakers — to be among the best seamstresses in the world.

Captain Lyon, one of the most observant of Arctic voyagers, has given a description of the costume of the Esquimaux of Savage Island, and those of Repulse Bay, where he wintered, and his account is so graphic and minute in details, that it would be idle to alter a word of his language. His description, with slight differences in make and material, will answer pretty accurately for the costume of the whole race.

"The clothes of both sexes are principally composed of fine and well-prepared reindeer pelts; the skins of bears, seals, wolves, foxes, and marmottes, are also used. The seal-skins are seldom employed for any part of the dress except boots and shoes, as being more capable of resisting water, and of far greater durability than other leather.

"The general winter dress of the men is an ample outer coat of deer-skin, having no opening in front, and a large hood, which is drawn over the head at pleasure. This hood is invariably bordered with white fur from the thighs of the deer, and thus presents a lively contrast to the dark face which it encircles. The front or belly part of the coat is cut off square with the upper part of the thighs, but behind it is formed into a broad skirt, rounded at the lower end, which reaches to within a few inches of the ground. The lower edges and tails of these dresses are in some cases bordered with bands of fur of an opposite color to the body; and it is a favorite ornament to hang a fringe of little strips of skin beneath the border. The embellishments give a very

pleasing appearance to the dress. It is customary in blowing weather to tie a piece of skin or cord tight round the waist of the coat; but in other cases the dress hangs loose.

"Within the covering I have just described is another, of precisely the same form; but though destitute of ornaments of leather, it has frequently little strings of beads hanging to it from the shoulders or small of the back. This dress is of thinner skin, and acts as a shirt, the hairy part being placed near the body: it is the in-doors habit. When walking, the tail is tied up by two strings to the back, so that it may not incommode the legs. Besides these two coats, they have also a large cloak, or, in fact, an open deer-skin, with sleeves: this, from its size, is more frequently used as a blanket; and I but once saw it worn by a man at the ship, although the women throw it over their shoulders to shelter themselves and children while sitting on the sledge.

"The trowsers, which are tightly tied round the loins, have no waistbands, but depend entirely by the drawing-string; they are generally of deer-skin, and ornamented in the same manner as the coats. One of the most favorite patterns is an arrangement of the skins of deer's legs, so as to form very pretty stripes. As with the jackets, there are two pair of these indispensables, reaching no lower than the knee-cap, which is a cause of great distress in cold weather, as that part is frequently severely frost-bitten; yet, with all their experience of this bad contrivance, they will not add an inch to the established length.

"The boots reach to the bottom of the breeches, which hang loosely over them. In these, as in other parts of

the dress, are many varieties of color, material, and pattern, yet in shape they never vary. The general winter boots are of deer-skin; one having the hair next the leg, and the other with the fur outside. A pair of soft slippers of the same kind are worn between the two pair of boots, and outside of all a strong seal-skin shoe is pulled to the height of the ankle, where it is tightly secured by a drawing-string. For hunting excursions, or in summer when the country is thawed, one pair of boots only is worn. They are of sealskin, and so well sewed and prepared without the hair, that although completely saturated, they allow no water to pass through them. The soles are generally of the tough hide of the walrus, or of the large seal called Oō-ghĭoo, so that the feet are well protected in walking over rough ground. Slippers are sometimes worn outside. In both cases the boots are tightly fastened round the instep with a thong of leather. The mittens in common use are of deer-skin, with the hair inside; but, in fact, every kind of skin is used for them. They are extremely comfortable when dry; but if once wetted and frozen again, in the winter afford as little protection to the hands as a case of ice would do. In summer, and in fishing, excellent seal-skin mittens are used, and have the same power of resisting water as the boots of which I have just spoken. The dresses I have just described are chiefly used in winter. During the summer it is customary to wear coats, boots, and even breeches, composed of the prepared skins of ducks, with the feathers next the body. These are comfortable, light, and easily prepared. The few ornaments in their possession are worn by the men. These are some bandeaus which encircle the head, and are com-

posed of various-colored leather, plaited in a mosaic pattern, and in some cases having human hair woven in them, as a contrast to the white skins. From the lower edge foxes' teeth hang suspended, arranged as a fringe across the forehead. Some wear a musk-ox tooth, a bit of ivory, or a small piece of bone.

"The clothing of the women is of the same materials as that of the men, but in shape almost every part is different from the male dress. An inner jacket is worn next the skin, and the fur of the other is outside. The hind-flap, or tail, is of the same form before described, but there is also a small flap in front, extending about half-way down the thigh. The coats have each an immense hood, which, as well as covering the head, answers the purpose of a child's cradle for two or three years after the birth of an infant. In order to keep the burden of the child from drawing the dress tight across the throat, a contrivance, in a great measure resembling the slings of a soldier's knapsack, is affixed to the collar or neck part, whence it passes beneath the hood, crosses, and, being brought under the arms, is secured on each side the breast by a wooden button. The shoulders of the women's coat have a bag-like space, for the purpose of facilitating the removal of the child from the hood round to the breast without taking it out of the jacket.

"A girdle is sometimes worn round the waist: it answers the double purposes of comfort and ornament, being composed of what they consider valuable trinkets, such as foxes' bones (those of the rabbeaghioo), or sometimes of the ears of deer, which hang in pairs to the number of twenty or thirty, and are trophies of the skill of the hunter, to whom the wearer is allied. The

inexpressibles of the women are in the same form as those of the men, but they are not ornamented by the same curious arrangement of colors; the front part is generally of white, and the back of dark fur. The manner of securing them at the waist is also the same; but the drawing-strings are of much greater length, being suffered to hang down by one side, and their ends are frequently ornamented with some pendent jewel, such as a grinder or two of the musk-ox, a piece of ivory, a small ball of wood, or a perforated stone.

"The boots of the fair sex are, without dispute, the most extraordinary part of their equipment, and are of such an immense size as to resemble leather sacks, and to give a most deformed, and, at the same time, ludicrous appearance to the whole figure, the bulky part being at the knee; the upper end is formed into a pointed flap, which, covering the front of the thigh, is secured by a button or knot within the waistband of the breeches.

"Some of these ample articles of apparel are composed with considerable taste, of various colored skins; they also have them of parchment,—seals' leather. Two pairs are worn; and the feet have also a pair of seal-skin slippers, which fit close, and are tightly tied round the ankle.

"Children have no kind of clothing, but lie naked in their mothers' hoods until two or three years of age, when they are stuffed into a little dress, generally of fawn-skin, which has jacket and breeches in one, the back part being open; into these they are pushed, when a string or two closes all up again. A cap forms an indispensable part of the equipment, and is generally of some fantastical shape; the skin of a fawn's head is a

favorite material in the composition, and is sometimes seen with the ears perfect; the nose and holes for the eyes lying along the crown of the wearer's head, which in consequence, looks like that of an animal."

The same author also gives a most graphic description of the curious winter dwellings of the Esquimaux, which on many parts of the coast are built out of the only materials to be had, — *ice and snow!* Snow for the walls and ice for the windows! you might fancy the house of the Esquimaux to be a very cold dwelling; such, however, is by no means its character.

"The entrance to the dwellings," says Captain Lyon, "was by a hole, about a yard in diameter, which led through a low-arched passage of sufficient breadth for two to pass in a stooping posture, and about sixteen feet in length; another hole then presented itself, and led through a similarly-shaped, but shorter passage, having at its termination a round opening, about two feet across. Up this hole we crept one step, and found ourselves in a dome about seven feet in height, and as many in diameter, from whence the three dwelling-places, with arched roofs, were entered. It must be observed that this is the description of a large hut, the smaller ones, containing one or two families, have the domes somewhat differently arranged.

"Each dwelling might be averaged at fourteen or sixteen feet in diameter by six or seven in height, but as snow alone was used in their construction, and was always at hand, it might be supposed that there was no particular size, that being of course at the option of the builder. The laying of the arch was performed in such a manner as would have satisfied the most regular artist,

the key-piece on the top, being a large square slab The blocks of snow used in the buildings were from four to six inches in thickness, and about a couple of feet in length, carefully pared with a large knife. Where two families occupied a dome, a seat was raised on either side, two feet in height. These raised places were used as beds, and covered in the first place with whalebone, sprigs of andromeda, or pieces of seals'-skin, over these were spread deer-pelts and deer-skin clothes, which had a very warm appearance. The pelts were used as blankets, and many of them had ornamental fringes of leather sewed round their edges.

"Each dwelling-place was illumined by a broad piece of transparent fresh-water ice, of about two feet in diameter, which formed part of the roof, and was placed over the door. These windows gave a most pleasing light, free from glare, and something like that which is thrown through ground glass. We soon learned that the building of a house was but the work of an hour or two, and that a couple of men — one to cut the slabs and the other to lay them — were laborers sufficient.

"For the support of the lamps and cooking apparatus, a mound of snow is erected for each family; and when the master has two wives or a mother, both have an independent place, one at each end of the bench.

"I find it impossible to attempt describing everything at a second visit, and shall therefore only give an account of those articles of furniture which must be always the same, and with which, in five minutes, any one might be acquainted. A frame, composed of two or three broken fishing-spears, supported in the first place a large hoop of wood or bone, across which an open-meshed and ill-

made net was spread or worked for the reception of wet or damp clothes, skins, etc., which could be dried by the heat of the lamp. On this contrivance the master of each hut placed his gloves on entering, first carefully clearing them of snow.

"From the frame above-mentioned, one or more coffin-shaped stone pots were suspended over lamps of the same material, crescent-shaped, and having a ridge extending along their back; the bowl part was filled with blubber, and the oil and wicks were ranged close together along the edge. The wicks were made of moss and trimmed by a piece of asbestos, stone, or wood; near at hand a large bundle of moss was hanging for a future supply. The lamps were supported by sticks, bones, or pieces of horn, at a sufficient height to admit an oval pot of wood or whalebone beneath, in order to catch any oil that might drop from them. The lamps varied considerably in size, from two feet to six inches in length, and the pots were equally irregular, holding from two or three gallons to half a pint. Although I have mentioned a kind of scaffolding, these people did not all possess so grand an establishment, many being contented to suspend their pot to a piece of bone stuck in the wall of the hut. One young woman was quite a caricature in this way: she was the inferior wife of a young man, whose senior lady was of a large size, and had a corresponding lamp, etc., at one corner; while she herself, being short and fat, had a lamp the size of half a dessert-plate, and a pot which held a pint only.

"Almost every family was possessed of a large wooden tray, resembling those used by butchers in England; its offices, however, as we soon perceived, were

more various, some containing raw flesh of seals and blubber, and others, skins, which were steeping in urine. A quantity of variously-sized bowls of whalebone, wood, or skin, completed the list of vessels, and it was evident that they were made to contain *anything*."

The Esquimaux use two kinds of boats, — the "oomiak" and "kayak." The oomiak is merely a large species of punt, used exclusively by the women; but the kayak is a triumph in the art of naval architecture, and is as elegant as it is ingenious. It is about twenty-five feet in length, and less than two in breadth of beam. In shape it has been compared to a weaver's shuttle, though it tapers much more elegantly than this piece of machinery. It is decked from stem to stern, excepting a circular hole very nearly amidships, and this round hatchway is just large enough to admit the body of an Esquimaux in a sitting posture. Around the rim of the circle is a little ridge, sometimes higher in front than at the back, and this ridge is often ornamented with a hoop of ivory. A flat piece of wood runs along each side of the frame, and is, in fact, the only piece of any strength in a kayak. Its depth in the centre is four or five incles, and its thickness about three fourths of an inch; it tapers to a point at the commencement of the stem and stern projections. Sixty-four ribs are fastened to this gunwale piece; seven slight rods run the whole length of the bottom and outside the ribs. The bottom is rounded, and has no keel; twenty-two little beams or cross-pieces keep the frame on a stretch above, and one strong batten runs along the centre, from stem to stern, being, of course, discontinued at the seat part. The ribs are made of ground willow, also of whalebone, or, if it can be procured, of

good-grained wood. The whole contrivance does not weigh over fifty or sixty pounds; so that a man easily carries his kayak on his head, which, by the form of the rim, he can do without the assistance of his hands.

An Esquimaux prides himself in the neat appearance of his boat, and has a warm skin placed in its bottom to sit on. His posture is with the legs pointed forward, and he cannot change his position without the assistance of another person; in all cases where a weight is to be lifted, an alteration of stowage, or any movement to be made, it is customary for two kayaks to lie together; and the paddle of each being placed across the other, they form a steady double boat. An inflated seal's bladder forms, invariably, part of the equipage of a canoe, and the weapons are confined in their places by small lines of whalebone, stretched tightly across the upper covering, so as to receive the points or handles of the spears beneath them. Flesh is frequently stowed within the stem or stern, as are also birds and eggs; but a seal, although round, and easily made to roll, is so neatly balanced on the upper part of the boat as seldom to require a lashing. When Esquimaux are not paddling, their balance must be nicely preserved, and a trembling motion is always observable in the boat. The most difficult position for managing a kayak is when going before the wind, and with a little swell running. Any inattention would instantly, by exposing the broadside, overturn this frail vessel. The dexterity with which they are turned, the velocity of their way, and the extreme elegance of form of the kayaks, render an Esquimaux of the highest interest when sitting independently, and urging his course towards his prey.

"The paddle is double-bladed, nine feet three inches in length, small at the grasp, and widening to four inches at the blades, which are thin, and edged with ivory for strength as well as ornament.

"The next object of importance to the boat is the sledge, which finds occupation during at least three fourths of the year. A man who possesses both this and a canoe is considered a person of property. To give a particular description of the sledge would be impossible, as there are no two actually alike; and the materials of which they are composed are as various as their form. The best are made of the jaw-bones of the whale, sawed to about two inches in thickness, and in depth from six inches to a foot. These are the runners, and are shod with a thin plank of the same material; the side-pieces are connected by means of bones, pieces of wood, or deers' horns, lashed across, with a few inches space between each, and they yield to any great strain which the sledge may receive. The general breadth of the upper part of the sledge is about twenty inches; but the runners lean inwards, and therefore at bottom it is rather greater. The length of bone sledges is from four feet to fourteen. Their weight is necessarily great; and one of moderate size, that is to say, about ten or twelve feet, was found to be two hundred and seventeen pounds. The skin of the walrus is very commonly used during the coldest part of the winter, as being hard-frozen, and resembling an inch board, with ten time the strength, for runners. Another ingenious contrivance is, by casing moss and earth in seal's skin, so that by pouring a little water a round hard bolster is easily formed. Across all these kinds of runners there is the same arrangement of bones,

sticks, &c., on the upper part; and the surface which passes over the snow is coated with ice, by mixing snow with fresh water, which assists greatly in lightening the load for the dogs, as it slides forwards with ease. Boys frequently amuse themselves by yoking several dogs to a small piece of seal's skin, and sitting on it, holding by the traces. Their plan is then to set off at full speed, and he who bears the greatest number of bumps before he relinquishes his hold is considered a very fine fellow.

"The Esquimaux possess various kinds of spears, but their difference is chiefly in consequence of the substances of which they are composed, and not in their general form.

"One called kā-tĕ-tēek, is a large and strong-handled spear, with an ivory point made for despatching any wounded animal in the water. It is never thrown, but has a place appropriated for it on the kayak.

"The oonak is a lighter kind than the former; also ivory-headed. It has a bladder fastened to it, and has a loose head with a line attached; this being darted into an animal, is instantly liberated from the handle which gives the impetus. Some few of these weapons are constructed of the solid ivory of the unicorn's horn, about four feet in length, and remarkably well rounded and polished.

"Ip-pŏo-tōo-yŏo, is another kind of hand-spear, varying but little from the one last described. It has, however, no appendages.

"The Noōgh-wĭt is of two kinds; but both are used for striking birds, young animals, or fish. The first has a double fork at the extremity, and there are three other barbed ones at about half its length, diverging in differ-

nt directions, so that if the end pair should miss, some of the centre ones might strike. The second kind has only three barbed forks at the head. All the points are of ivory, and the natural curve of the walrus tusk favors and facilitates their construction.

"Amongst the minor instruments of the ice-hunting are a long bone feeler for plumbing any cracks through which seals are suspected of breathing, and also for trying the safety of the road. Another contrivance is occasionally used with the same effect as the float of a fishing-line. Its purpose it to warn the hunter, who is watching a seal-hole, when the animal rises to the surface, so that he may strike without seeing, or being seen, by his prey. This is a most delicate little rod of bone or ivory, of about a foot in length, and the thickness of a fine knitting-needle. At the lower end is a small knob like a pin's head, and the upper extremity has a fine piece of sinew tied to it, so as to fasten it loosely to the side of the hole. The animal, on rising, does not perceive so small an object hanging in the water, and pushes it up with his nose, when the watchful Esquimaux, observing his little beacon in motion, strikes down, and secures his prize.

"Small ivory pegs or pins are used to stop the holes made by the spears in the animal's body; thus the blood, a great luxury to the natives, is saved.

"The same want of wood which renders it necessary to find substitutes in the construction of spears, also occasions the great variety of bows. The horn of the musk-ox, thinned horns of deer, or other bony substances, are as frequently used or met with as wood, in the manufacture of these weapons, in which elasticity is a very

secondary consideration. Three or four pieces of horn or wood are frequently joined together in one bow, — the strength lying alone in a vast collection of small plaited sinews; these, to the number of perhaps a hundred, run down the back of the bow, and being quite tight, and having the spring of catgut, cause the weapon, when unstrung, to turn the wrong way; when bent, their united strength and elasticity are amazing. The bow-string is of fifteen to twenty plaits, each loose from the other, but twisted round when in use, so that a few additional turns will at any time alter its length. The general length of the bows is about three feet and a half.

"The arrows are short, light, and formed according to no general rule as to length or thickness. A good one has half the shaft of bone, and a head of hard slate, or a small piece of iron; others have sharply-pointed bone heads: none are barbed. Two feathers are used for the end, and are tied opposite each other, with the flat sides parallel. A neatly-formed case contains the bow and a few arrows. Seal-skin is preferred for this purpose, as more effectually resisting the wet than any other. A little bag, which is attached to the side, contains a stone for sharpening, and some spare arrow-heads carefully wrapped up in a piece of skin.

"The bow is held in a horizontal position, and though capable of great force, is rarely used at a greater distance than from twelve to twenty yards."

Their houses, clothing, sledges, boats, utensils, and arms, being now described, it only remains to be seen in what manner these most singular people pass their time, how they supply themselves with food, and how

they manage to support life during the long dark winter and the scarce less hospitable summer of their rigorous clime. Their occupations from year to year are carried on with an almost unvarying regularity, though, like their dresses, they change according to the season.

Their short summer is chiefly employed in hunting the reindeer, and other quadrupeds, — for the simple reason that it is at this season that these appear in greatest numbers among them, migrating northward as the snow thaws from the valleys and hill-sides. Not but that they also kill the reindeer in other seasons, for these animals do not all migrate southward on the approach of winter, a considerable number remaining all the year upon the shores of the Arctic Sea, as well as the islands to the north of them. Of course, the Esquimaux kills a reindeer when and where he can; and it may be here remarked, that in no part of the American continent has the reindeer been trained or domesticated as among the Laplanders and the people of Russian Asia. Neither the Northern Indians (Tinné) nor the Esquimaux have ever reached this degree in domestic civilization, and this fact is one of the strongest points of difference between the American Esquimaux and their kindred races in the north of Asia. One tribe of true Esquimaux alone hold the reindeer in subjection, viz. the Tuski, already mentioned, on the Asiatic shore; and it might easily be shown that the practice reached them from the contiguous countries of northern Asia. The American Esquimaux, like those of Greenland, possess only the dog as a domesticated animal; and him they have trained to draw their sledges in a style that exhibits the highest order of skill, and even elegance. The Esquimaux dog

is too well known to require particular description. He is often brought to this country in the return ships of Arctic whalers and voyagers; and his thick, stout body covered closely with long stiff hair of a whitish or yellowish color, his cocked ears and smooth muzzle, and, above all, the circle-like curling of his bushy tail, will easily be remembered by any one who has ever seen this valuable animal.

In summer, then, the Esquimaux desert their winter houses upon the shore, and taking with them their tents make an excursion into the interior. They do not go far from the sea — no farther than is necessary to find the valleys browsed by the reindeer, and the fresh-water lakes, which, at this season, are frequented by flocks of swans, geese of various kinds, ducks, and other aquatic birds. Hunting the reindeer forms their principal occupation at this time; but, of course, "all is fish that comes into the net" of an Esquimaux; and they also employ themselves in capturing the wild fowl and the fresh-water fish, in which these lakes abound. With the wild fowl it is the breeding and moulting season, and the Esquimaux not only rob them of their eggs, but take large numbers of the young before they are sufficiently fledged to enable them to fly, and also the old ones while similarly incapacitated from their condition of "moult." In their swift kayaks which they have carried with them on their heads, they can pursue the fluttering flocks over any part of a lake, and overtake them wherever they may go. This is a season of great plenty in the larder of the *Inuit*.

The fresh-water fish are struck with spears out of the kayaks, or, when there is ice on the water strong

enough to bear the weight of a man, the fish are captured in a different manner. A hole is broken in the ice, the broken fragments are skimmed off and cast aside, and then the fisherman lets down a shining bauble — usually the white tooth of some animal — to act as a bait. This he keeps bobbing about until the fish, perceiving it afar off through the translucent water, usually approaches to reconnoitre, partly from curiosity, but more, perhaps, to see if it be anything to eat. When near enough the Esquimaux adroitly pins the victim with his fish-spear, and lands it upon the ice. This species of fishing is usually delivered over to the boys — the time of the hunters being too valuable to be wasted in waiting for the approach of the fish to the decoy, an event of precarious and uncertain occurrence.

In capturing the reindeer, the Esquimaux practises no method very different from that used by "still hunters" in other parts of America. He has to depend alone upon his bow and arrows, but with these poor weapons he contrives to make more havoc among a herd of deer than would a backwoods hunter with his redoubtable rifle. There is no mystery about his superior management. It consists simply in the exhibition of the great strategy and patience with which he makes his approaches, crawling from point to point and using every available cover which the ground may afford.

But all this would be of little avail were it not for a *ruse* which he puts in practice, and which brings the unsuspecting deer within reach of his deadly arrows. This consists in a close imitation of the cries of the animal, so close that the sharp-eared creature itself cannot detect the counterfeit, but, drawing nearer and

nearer to the rock or bush from which the call appears to proceed, falls a victim to the deception. The silent arrow makes no audible sound; the herd, if slightly disturbed at seeing one of their number fall, soon compose themselves, and go on browsing upon the grass or licking up the lichen. Another is attracted by the call, and another, who fall in their turn victims either to their curiosity or the instinct of amorous passions.

For this species of hunting, the bow far excels any other weapon; even the rifle is inferior to it.

Sometimes the Esquimaux take the deer in large numbers, by hunting them with dogs, driving the herd into some defile or *cul de sac* among the rocks, and then killing them at will with their arrows and javelins. This, however, is an exceptional case, as such natural "pounds" are not always at hand. The Indians farther south construct artificial enclosures; but in the Esquimaux country there is neither time nor material for such elaborate contrivances.

The Esquimaux who dwell in those parts frequented by the musk-oxen, hunt these animals very much as they do the reindeer; but killing a musk bull, or cow either, is a feat of far grander magnitude, and requires more address than shooting a tiny deer.

I have said that the Esquimaux do not, even in these hunting excursions, stray very far into the interior. There is a good reason for their keeping close to the seashore. Were they to penetrate far into the land they would be in danger of meeting with their bitter foemen, the *Tinné* Indians, who in this region also hunt reindeer and musk-oxen. War to the knife

is the practice between these two races of people, and has ever been since the first knowledge of either. They often meet in conflict upon the rivers inland, and these conflicts are of so cruel and sanguinary a nature as to imbue each with a wholesome fear of the other. The Indians, however, dread the Esquimaux more than the latter fear them; and up to a late period took good care never to approach their coasts; but the musket and rifle have now got into the hands of some of the northern tribes, who avail themselves of these superior weapons, not only to keep the Esquimaux at bay, but also to render them more cautious about extending their range towards the interior.

When the dreary winter begins to make its appearance, and the reindeer grow scarce upon the snow-covered plains, the Esquimaux return to their winter villages upon the coast. Quadrupeds and birds no longer occupy their whole attention, for the drift of their thoughts is now turned towards the inhabitants of the great deep. The seal and the walrus are henceforth the main objects of pursuit. Perhaps during the summer, when the water was open, they may have visited the shore for the purpose of capturing that great giant of the icy seas — a whale. If so, and they have been successful in only one or two captures, they may look forward to a winter of plenty — since the flesh of a full-grown whale, or, better still, a brace of such ample creatures, would be sufficient to feed a whole tribe for months.

They have no curing process for this immense carcass; they stand in need of none. Neither salt nor smoking is required in their climate. Jack Frost is their provision

curer, and performs the task without putting them either to trouble or expense. It is only necessary for them to hoist the great flitches upon scaffolds, already erected for the purpose, so as to keep the meat from the wolves, wolverines, foxes, and their own half-starved dogs. From their aërial larder they can cut a piece of blubber whenever they feel hungry, or they have a mind to eat, and this *mind* they are in so long as a morsel is left.

Their mode of capturing a whale is quite different from that practised by the whale-fishers. When the huge creature is discovered near, the whole tribe sally forth, and surround it in their kayaks; they then hurl darts into its body, but instead of these having long lines attached to them, they are provided with seal skins sewed up air-tight and inflated, like bladders. When a number of these become attached to the body of the whale, the animal, powerful though he be, finds great difficulty in sinking far down, or even progressing rapidly through the water. He soon rises to the surface, and the seal-skin buoys indicate his whereabouts to the occupants of the kayaks, who in their swift little crafts, soon dart up to him again, and shoot a fresh volley into his body. In this way the whale is soon "wearied out," and then falls a victim to their larger spears, just as in the case where a capture is made by regular whalers.

I need scarcely add that a success of this kind is hailed as a jubilee of the tribe, since it not only brings a benefit to the whole community, but is also a piece of fortune of somewhat rare occurrence.

When no whales have been taken, the long, dark winter may justly be looked forward to with some solicitude; and it is then that the Esquimaux requires to put

forth all his skill and energies for the capture of the walrus or the seal — the latter of which may be regarded as the staff of his life, furnishing him not only with food, but with light, fuel, and clothing for his body and limbs.

Of the seals that inhabit the Polar Seas there are several species; but the common seal (*Calocephalus vitulina*) and the harp-seal (*C. Grœnlandicus*) are those most numerous, and consequently the principal object of pursuit.

The Esquimaux uses various stratagems for taking these creatures, according to the circumstances in which they may be encountered; and simpletons as the seals may appear, they are by no means easy of capture. They are usually very shy and suspicious, even in places where man has never been seen by them. They have other enemies, especially in the great polar bear; and the dread of this tyrant of the icy seas keeps them ever on the alert. Notwithstanding their watchfulness, however, both the bear and the biped make great havoc among them, and each year hundreds of thousands of them are destroyed.

The bear, in capturing seals, exhibits a skill and cunning scarce excelled by that of the rational being himself. When this great quadruped perceives a seal basking on the edge of an ice-field, he makes his approaches, not by rushing directly towards it, which he well knows would defeat his purpose. If once seen by the seal, the latter has only to betake himself to the water, where it can soon sink or swim beyond the reach of the bear. To prevent this, the bear gets well to leeward, and then diving below the surface, makes his approaches under water, now and then cautiously raising his head to get the true

bearings of his intended victim. After a number of these subaqueous "reaches," he gets close in to the edge of the floe in such a position as to cut off the seal's retreat to the water. A single spring brings him on the ice, and then, before the poor seal has time to make a brace of flounders, it finds itself locked in the deadly embrace of the bear. When seals are thus detected asleep, the Esquimaux approaches them in his kayak, taking care to paddle cautiously and silently If he succeed in getting between them and the open water, he kills them in the ordinary way — by simply knocking them on the snout with a club, or piercing them with a spear. Sometimes, however, the seal goes to sleep on the surface of the open water. Then the approach is made in a similar manner by means of the kayak, and the animal is struck with a harpoon. But a single blow does not always kill a seal, especially if it be a large one, and the blow has been ill-directed. In such cases the animal would undoubtedly make his escape, and carry the harpoon along with it, which would be a serious loss to the owner, who does not obtain such weapons without great difficulty. To prevent this, the Esquimaux uses a contrivance similar to that employed in the capture of the whale, — that is, he attaches a float or buoy to his harpoon by means of a cord, and this so impedes the passage of the seal through the water, that it can neither dive nor swim to any very great distance. The float is usually a walrus bladder inflated in the ordinary way, and wherever the seal may go, the float betrays its track, enabling the Esquimaux to follow it in his shuttle-shaped kayak, and pierce it again with a surer aim.

In winter, when the sea is quite covered with ice, you

might fancy that the seal-fishery would be at an end, for the seal is essentially a marine animal ; and although it can exist upon the ice or on dry land, it could not *subsist* there. Access to the water it must have, in order to procure its food, which consists of small fish and mollusks. Of course, when the ice forms on the surface, the seal is in its true element — the water underneath — but when this ice becomes, as it often does, a full yard in thickness, extending over hundreds of miles of the sea, how then is the seal to be got at? It could not be reached at all; and at such a season the Esquimaux people would undoubtedly starve, were it not for a habit peculiar to this animal, which, happily for them, brings it within their reach.

Though the seal can live under water like a fish, and probably could pass a whole winter under the ice without much inconvenience, it likes now and then to take a little fresh air, and have a quiet nap upon the upper surface in the open air. With this design it breaks a hole through the ice, while the latter is yet thin, and this hole it keeps carefully open during the whole winter, clearing out each new crust as it forms. No matter to what thickness the ice may attain, this hole always forms a breathing-place for the seal, and a passage by which he may reach the upper surface, and indulge himself in his favorite siesta in the open air. Knowing this habit, the Esquimaux takes advantage of it to make the seal his captive. When the animal is discovered on the ice, the hunter approaches with the greatest stealth and caution. This is absolutely neccessary: for if the enemy is perceived, or makes the slightest noise, the wary seal flounders rapidly into his hole, and is lost beyond redemption. If badly frightened,

he will not appear for a long time, denying himself his open air exercise until the patience of his persecutor is quite worn out, and the coast is again clear.

In making his approaches, the hunter uses all his art, not only taking advantage of every inequality — such as snow-drifts and ice-hillocks — to conceal himself; but he also practises an ingenious deception by dressing himself in the skin of a seal of like species, giving his body the figure of the animal, and counterfeiting its motions, by floundering clumsily over the ice, and oscillating his head from side to side, just as seals are seen to do.

This deception often proves successful, when the hunter under any other shape would in vain endeavor to get within striking distance of his prey. When seals are scarce, and the supply greatly needed, the Esquimaux often lies patiently for hours together on the edge of a seal-hole waiting for the animal to come up. In order to give it time to get well out upon the ice, the hunter conceals himself behind a heap of snow, which he has collected and piled up for the purpose. A float-stick, ingeniously placed in the water of the breathing-hole, serves as a signal to tell when the seal is mounting through his trap-like passage, the motion of the stick betraying its ascent. The hunter then gets himself into the right attitude to strike, and summons all his energies for the encounter.

Even during the long, dark night of winter this mode of capturing the seal is practised. The hunter, having discovered a breathing-hole — which its dark color enables him to find — proceeds in the following manner: he scrapes away the snow from around it, and lifting up some water pours it on the ice, so as to make a circle

of a darker hue around the orifice. He then makes a sort of cake of pure white snow, and with this covers the hole as with a lid. In the centre of this lid he punches a small opening with the shaft-end of his spear, and then sits down and patiently awaits the issue.

The seal ascends unsuspiciously as before. The dark water, bubbling up through the small central orifice, betrays its approach, which can be perceived even in the darkest night. The hunter does not wait for its climbing out upon the ice. Perhaps if he did so, the suspicious creature might detect the device, and dive down again. But it is not allowed time for reflection. Before it can turn its unwieldly body, the heavy spear of the hunter — struck through the yielding snow — descends upon its skull, and kills it on the instant.

The great "walrus" or "morse" (*Trichecus rosmarus*) is another important product of the Polar Seas, and is hunted by the Esquimaux with great assiduity. This splendid amphibious animal is taken by contrivances very similar to those used for the seal; but the capture of a walrus is an event of importance, second only to the striking of a whale. Its great carcass not only supplies food to a whole village, but an oil superior to that of the whale, besides various other useful articles. Its skin, bones, and intestines are employed by the Esquimaux for many domestic purposes, — and, in addition, there are the huge molar tusks, that furnish one of the most valuable ivories of commerce, from which are manufactured those beautiful sets of teeth, of dazzling whiteness, that, gleaming between vermilion lips, you may often see at a ball or an evening party!

THE TONGANS, OR FRIENDLY ISLANDERS

It is a pleasure to pass out of the company of the ferocious Feegees into that of another people, which, though near neighbors of the former, are different from them in almost every respect, — I mean the Tongans, or Friendly Islanders. This appellation scarce requires to be explained. Every one knows that it was bestowed upon them by the celebrated navigator Cook, — who although not the actual discoverer of the Tonga group was the first who thoroughly explored these islands, and gave any reliable account of them to the civilized world. Tasman, who might be termed the "Dutch Captain Cook," is allowed to be their discoverer, so long ago as 1643; though there is reason to believe that some of the Spanish explorers from Peru may have touched at these islands before his time. Tasman, however, has fixed the record of his visit, and is therefore entitled to the credit of the discovery, — as he is also to that of Australia, New Zealand, Van Diemen's Land, and other now well-known islands of the Southwestern Pacific. Tasman bestowed upon three of the Tonga group the names — Amsterdam, Rotterdam, and Middleburgh; but, fortunately, geographers have acted in this matter with

better taste than is their wont; and Tasman's Dutch national titles have fallen into disuse, — while the true native names of the islands have been restored to the map. This is what should be done with other Pacific islands as well; for it is difficult to conceive anything in worse taste than such titles as the Caroline and Loyalty Isles, Prince William's Land, King George's Island, and the ten thousand Albert and Victoria Lands which the genius of flattery, or rather flunkeyism, has so liberally distributed over the face of the earth. The title of Friendly Isles, bestowed by Cook upon the Tonga archipelago, deserves to live; since it is not only appropriate, but forms the record of a pleasant fact, — the pacific character of our earliest intercourse with these interesting people.

It may be here remarked, that Mr. Wylde and other superficial map-makers have taken a most unwarrantable liberty with this title. Instead of leaving it as bestowed by the great navigator, — applicable to the Tonga archipelago alone, — they have *stretched* it to include that of the Samoans, and — would it be believed — that of the *Feegees?* It is hardly necessary to point out the extreme absurdity of such a classification: since it would be difficult to find two nationalities much more unlike than those of Tonga and Feegee. That they have many customs in common, is due (unfortunately for the Tongans) to the intercourse which proximity has produced; but in an ethnological sense, white is not a greater contrast to black, nor good to evil, than that which exists between a Tongan and a Feegeean. Cook never visited the Feegee archipelago, — he only saw some of these people while at Tonga-taboo, and heard of their country as

being *a large island.* Had he visited that island, — or rather that group of over two hundred islands, — it is not at all likely he would have seen reason to extend to them the title which the map-makers have thought fit to bestow. Instead of "Friendly Islands," he might by way of contrast have called them the "Hostile Isles," or given them that — above all others most appropriate, and which they truly deserve to bear — that old title celebrated in song! the "Cannibal Islands." An observer so acute as Cook could scarce have overlooked the appropriateness of the appellation.

The situation of the Tonga, or Friendly Isles, is easily registered in the memory. The parallel of 20° south, and the meridian of 175° west, very nearly intersect each other in Tofoa, which may be regarded as the central island of the group. It will thus be seen that their central point is 5° east and 2° south of the centre of the Feegeean archipelago, and the nearest islands of the two groups are about three hundred miles apart.

It is worthy of observation, however, that the Tonga Isles have the advantage, as regards the wind. The *trades* are in their favor; and from Tonga to Feegee, if we employ a landsman's phraseology, it is "down hill," while it is all "up hill" in the contrary direction. The consequence is, that many Tongans are constantly making voyages to the Feegee group, — a large number of them having settled there (as stated elsewhere), — while but a limited number of Feegeeans find their way to the Friendly Islands. There is another reason for this unequally-balanced migration: and that is, that the Tongans are much bolder and better sailors than their western neighbors; for although the Feegees far excel

any other South-Sea islanders in the art of *building* their canoes (or ships as they might reasonably be called), yet they are as far behind many others in the art of *sailing* them.

Their superiority in ship-building may be attributed, partly, to the excellent materials which these islands abundantly afford; though this is not the sole cause. However much we may deny to the Feegeeans the possession of moral qualities, we are at the same time forced to admit their great intellectual capacity, — as exhibited in the advanced state of their arts and manufactures. In intellectual capacity, however, the Friendly Islanders are their equals; and the superiority of the Feegeeans even in "canoe architecture" is no longer acknowledged. It is true the Tongans go to the Feegee group for most of their large double vessels; but that is for the reasons already stated, — the greater abundance and superior quality of the timber and other materials produced there. In the Feegee "dockyards," the Tongans build for themselves; and have even improved upon the borrowed pattern.

This intercourse, — partaking somewhat of the character of an alliance, — although in some respects advantageous to the Friendly Islanders, may be regarded, upon the whole, as unfortunate for them. If it has improved their knowledge in arts and manufactures, it has far more than counterbalanced this advantage by the damage done to their moral character. It is always much easier to make proselytes to vice than to virtue, — as is proved in this instance: for his intercourse with the ferocious Feegee has done much to deteriorate the character of the Tongan. From that source he has im-

bibed a fondness for war and other wicked customs; and in all probability, had this influence been permitted to continue uninterrupted for a few years longer, the horrid habit of cannibalism — though entirely repugnant to the natural disposition of the Tongans — would have become common among them. Indeed, there can be little doubt that this would have been the ultimate consequence of the alliance; for already its precursors — human sacrifices and the vengeful immolation of enemies — had made their appearance upon the Friendly Islands. Happily for the Tongan, another influence — that of the missionaries — came just in time to avert this dire catastrophe; and, although this missionary interference has not been the best of its kind, it is still preferable to the paganism which it has partially succeeded in subduing.

The Tongan archipelago is much less extensive than that of the Feegees, — the islands being of a limited number, and only five or six of them of any considerable size. Tongataboo, the largest, is about ninety miles in circumference. From the most southern of the group Eoo, to Vavau at the other extremity, it stretches, northerly or northeasterly, about two hundred miles, in a nearly direct line. The islands are all, with one or two exceptions, low-lying, their surface being diversified by a few hillocks or mounds, of fifty or sixty feet in height, most of which have the appearance of being artificial. Some of the smaller islets, as Kao, are mountains of some six hundred feet elevation, rising directly out of the sea; while Tofoa, near the eastern edge of the archipelago, presents the appearance of an elevated table-land. The larger number of them are

clothed with a rich tropical vegetation, both natural and cultivated, and their botany includes most of the species common to the other islands of the South Sea. We find the cocoa, and three other species of palm, the pandanus, the bread-fruit in varieties, as also the useful musacaæ, — the plantain, and banana. The ti-tree (*Dracæna terminalis*), the paper-mulberry (*Broussonetia papyrifera*), the sugar-cane, yams of many kinds, the tree yielding the well-known *turmeric*, the beautiful *casuarina*, and a hundred other sorts of plants, shrubs, or trees, valuable for the product of their roots or fruits, their sap and pith, of their trunks and branches, their leaves and the fibrous material of their bark.

As a scenic decoration to the soil, there is no part of the world where more lovely landscapes are produced by the aid of a luxuriant vegetation. They are perhaps not equal in picturesque effect to those of the Feegee group, — where mountains form an adjunct to the scenery, — but in point of soft, quiet beauty, the landscapes of the Tonga Islands are not surpassed by any others in the tropical world; and with the climate they enjoy — that of an endless summer — they might well answer to the description of the "abode of the Blessed." And, indeed, when Tasman first looked upon these islands, they perhaps merited the title more than any other spot on the habitable globe; for, if any people on this earth might be esteemed happy and blessed, surely it was the inhabitants of these fair isles of the far Southern Sea. Tasman even records the remarkable fact, that he saw no arms among them, — no weapons of war! and perhaps, at that time, neither the detestable trade nor its implements were known to them. Alas

in little more than a century afterwards, this peaceful aspect was no longer presented. When the great English navigator visited these islands, he found the war-club and spear in the hands of the people, both of Feegee pattern, and undoubtedly of the same ill-omened origin.

The personal appearance of the Friendly Islanders differs not a great deal from that of the other South-Sea tribes or nations. Of course we speak only of the true Polynesians of the brown complexion, without reference to the black-skinned islanders — as the Feegees and others of the Papuan stock. The two have neither resemblance nor relationship to one another; and it would not be difficult to show that they are of a totally distinct origin. As for the blacks, it is not even certain that they are themselves of one original stock; for the splendidly-developed cannibal of Feegee presents very few features in common with the wretched kangaroo-eater of West Australia. Whether the black islanders (or Melanesians as they have been designated) originally came from one source, is still a question for ethnologists; but there can be no doubt as to the direction whence they entered upon the colonization of the Pacific. That was certainly upon its western border, beyond which they have not made much progress: since the Feegeean archipelago is at the present time their most advanced station to the eastward. The brown or Polynesian races, on the contrary, began their migrations from the eastern border of the great ocean — in other words, they came from America; and the so-called Indians of America are, in my opinion, the *progenitors*, not the *descendants*, of these people of the

Ocean world. If learned ethnologists will give their attention to this view of the subject, and disembarrass their minds of that fabulous old fancy, about an original stock situated somewhere (they know not exactly where) upon the steppes of Asia, they will perhaps arrive at a more rational hypothesis about the peopling of the so-called new worlds, both the American and Oceanic. They will be able to prove — what might be here done if space would permit — that the Polynesians are emigrants from tropical America, and that the Sandwich Islanders came originally from California, and not the Californians from the island homes of Hawaii.

It is of slight importance here how this question may be viewed. Enough to know that the natives of the Tonga group bear a strong resemblance to those of the other Polynesian archipelagos — to the Otaheitans and New Zealanders, but most of all to the inhabitants of the Samoan or Navigators' Islands, of whom, indeed, they may be regarded as a branch, with a separate political and geographical existence. Their language also confirms the affinity, as it is merely a dialect of the common tongue spoken by all the Polynesians.

Whatever difference exists between the Tongans and other Polynesians in point of personal appearance, is in favor of the former. The men are generally regarded as the best-looking of all South-Sea Islanders, and the women among the fairest of their sex. Many of them would be accounted beautiful in any part of the world; and as a general rule, they possess personal beauty in a far higher degree than the much-talked-of Otaheitans.

The Tongans are of tall stature — rather above than under that of European nations. Men of six feet are

common enough ; though few are seen of what might be termed gigantic proportions. In fact, the true medium size is almost universal, and the excess in either direction forms the exception. The bulk of their bodies is in perfect proportion to their height. Unlike the black Feegeeans — who are often bony and gaunt — the Tongans possess well-rounded arms and limbs ; and the hands and feet, especially those of the women, are small and elegantly shaped.

To give a delineation of their features would be a difficult task — since these are so varied in different individuals, that it would be almost impossible to select a good typical face. Indeed the same might be said of nearly every nation on the face of the earth ; and the difficulty will be understood by your making an attempt to describe some face that will answer for every set of features in a large town, or even a small village ; or still, with greater limitation, for the different individuals of a single family. Just such a variety there will be found among the faces of the Friendly Islanders, as you might note in the inhabitants of an English town or county ; and hence the difficulty of making a correct likeness. A few characteristic points, however, may be given, both as to their features and complexion. Their lips are scarcely ever of a thick or negro form ; and although the noses are in general rounded at the end, this rule is not universal ; — many have genuine Roman noses, and what may be termed a full set of the best Italian features. There is also less difference between the sexes in regard to their features than is usually seen elsewhere — those of the women being only distinguished by their less size.

The forms of the women constitute a more marked distinction; and among the beauties of Tonga are many that might be termed models in respect to shape and proportions. In color, the Tongans are lighter than most other South-Sea Islanders. Some of the better classes of women — those least exposed to the open air — show skins of a light olive tint; and the children of all are nearly white after birth. They become browner less from age than exposure to the sun; for, as soon as they are able to be abroad, they scarce ever afterwards enter under the shadow of a roof, except during the hours of night.

The Tongans have good eyes and teeth; but in this respect they are not superior to many other Oceanic tribes — even the black Feegeeans possessing both eyes and "ivories" scarce surpassed anywhere. The Tongans, however, have the advantage of their dusky neighbors in the matter of hair — their heads being clothed with a luxuriant growth of true hair. Sometimes it is quite straight, as among the American Indians, but oftener with a slight wave or undulation, or a curl approaching, but never quite arriving at the condition of "crisp."

His hair in its natural color is jet black; and it is to be regretted that the Tongans have not the good taste to leave it to its natural hue. On the contrary, their fashion is to stain it of a reddish-brown, a purple or an orange. The brown is obtained by the application of burnt coral, the purple from a vegetable dye applied poultice-fashion to the hair, and the orange is produced by a copious lathering of common turmeric, — with which the women also sometimes anoint their bodies, and those

of their children. This fashion of hair-dyeing is also common to the Feegees, and whether they obtained it from the Tongans, or the Tongans from them, is an unsettled point. The more probable hypothesis would be, that among many other ugly customs, it had its origin in Feegee-land, — where, however, the people assign a reason for practising it very different from the mere motive of ornament. They allege that it also serves a useful purpose, in preventing the too great fructification of a breed of parasitic insects, — that would otherwise find the immense mop of the frizzly Feegeean a most convenient dwelling-place, and a secure asylum from danger. This may have had something to do with the origin of the custom; but once established for purposes of utility, it is now confirmed, and kept up by the Tongans as a useless ornament. Their taste in the color runs exactly counter to that of European fashionables. What a pity it is that the two could not make an exchange of hair! Then both parties, like a pair of advertisements in the "Times," would exactly *fit* each other.

Besides the varied fashion in colors, there is also great variety in the styles in which the Tongans wear their hair. Some cut it short on one side of their head, leaving it at full length on the other; some shave a small patch, or cut off only a single lock; while others — and these certainly display the best taste — leave it to grow out in all its full luxuriance. In this, again, we find the European fashion reversed, for the women are those who wear it shortest. The men, although they are not without beard, usually crop this appendage very close, or shave it off altogether, — a piece of shell, or rather a pair of shells, serving them for a razor.

The mode is to place the thin edge of one shell underneath the hair, — just as a hair-cutter does his comb, — and with the edge of the other applied above, the hairs are rasped through and divided. There are regular barbers for this purpose, who by practice have been rendered exceedingly dexterous in its performance; and the victim of the operation alleges that there is little or no pain produced, — at all events, it does not bring the tears to his eyes, as a dull razor often does with us poor thin-skinned Europeans!

The dress of the Tongans is very similar to that of the Otaheitans, so often described and well known; but we cannot pass it here without remarking a notable peculiarity on the part of the Polynesian people, as exhibited in the character of their costume. The native tribes of almost all other warm climates content themselves with the most scant covering, — generally with no covering at all, but rarely with anything that may be termed a skirt. In South America most tribes wear the "guayuco," — a mere strip around the loins, and among the Feegees the "malo" or "masi" of the men, and the scant "liku" of the women are the only excuse for a modest garment. In Africa we find tribes equally destitute of clothing, and the same remark will apply to the tropical countries all around the globe. Here, however, amongst a people dwelling in the middle of a vast ocean, — isolated from the whole civilized world, we find a natural instinct of modesty that does credit to their character, and is even in keeping with that character, as first observed by voyagers to the South Seas. Whatever acts of indelicacy may be alleged against the Otaheitans, this has been much exaggerated by their intercourse with immoral

white men; but none of such criminal conduct can be charged against the natives of the Friendly Isles. On the contrary, the behavior of these, both among themselves and in presence of European visitors, has been ever characterized by a modesty that would shame either Regent Street or Ratcliffe Highway.

A description of the national costume of the Tongans, though often given, is not unworthy of a place here; and we shall give it as briefly as a proper understanding of it will allow. There is but one "garment" to be described, and that is the "pareu," which will be better understood, perhaps, by calling it a "petticoat." The material is usually of "tapa" cloth, — a fabric of native manufacture, to be described hereafter, — and the cutting out is one of the simplest of performances, requiring neither a tailor for the men, nor a dressmaker for the other sex, for every one can make their own pareu. It needs only to clip a piece of "tapa" cloth in the form of an "oblong square" — an ample one, being about two yards either way. This is wrapped round the body, — the middle part against the small of the back, — and then both ends brought round to the front are lapped over each other as far as they will go, producing, of course, a double fold of the cloth. A girdle is next tied around the waist, — usually a cord of ornamental plait; and this divides the piece of tapa into body and skirt. The latter is of such a length as to stretch below the calf of the leg, — sometimes down to the ankle, — and the upper part or body *would* reach to the shoulders, if the weather required it, and often does *when the missionaries require it.* But not at any other time: such an ungraceful mode of wearing the pareu was never

intended by the simple Tongans, who never dreamt of there being any immodesty in their fashion until told of it by their puritanical preceptors!

Tongan-fashion, the pareu is a sort of tunic, and a most graceful garment to boot; Methodist fashion, it becomes a gown or rather a sleeveless wrapper that resembles a sack. But if the body part is not to be used in this way, how, you will ask, is it to be disposed of? Is it allowed to hang down outside, like the gown of a slattern woman, who has only half got into it? No such thing. The natural arrangement is both simple and peculiar; and produces, moreover, a costume that is not only characteristic but graceful to the eye that once becomes used to it. The upper half of the tapa cloth is neatly folded or turned, until it becomes a thick roll; and this roll, brought round the body, just above the girdle, is secured in that position. The swell thus produced causes the waist to appear smaller by contrast; and the effect of a well-formed bust, rising above the roll of tapa cloth, is undoubtedly striking and elegant. In cold weather, but more especially at night, the roll is taken out, and the shoulders are then covered; for it is to be observed that the pareu, worn by day as a dress, is also kept on at night as a sleeping-gown, more especially by those who possess only a limited wardrobe. It is not always the cold that requires it to be kept on at night. It is more used, at this time, as a protection against the mosquitoes, that abound amidst the luxuriant vegetation of the Tongan Islands.

The "pareu" is not always made of the "tapa" cloth. Fine mats, woven from the fibres of the screw-pine (*pandanus*), are equally in vogue; and, upon fes

tive occasions, a full-dress pareu is embellished with red feather-work, adding greatly to the elegance and picturesqueness of its appearance. A coarser and scantier pareu is to be seen among the poorer people, the material of which is a rough tapa, fabricated from the bark of the bread-fruit, and not unfrequently this is only a mere strip wrapped around the loins; in other words, a "malo," "maro," or "maso," — as it is indifferently written in the varied orthography of the voyagers. Having described this only and unique garment, we have finished with the costume of the Tongan Islanders, both men and women, — for both wear the pareu alike. The head is almost universally uncovered; and no head-dress is ever worn unless a cap of feathers by the great chiefs, and this only upon rare and grand occasions. It is a sort of chaplet encircling the head, and deeper in front than behind. Over the forehead the plumes stand up to a height of twelve or fifteen inches, gradually lowering on each side as the ray extends backward beyond the ears. The main row is made with the beautiful tail-plumes of the tropic bird *Phaeton æthereus*, while the front or fillet part of the cap is ornamented with the scarlet feathers of a species of parrot.

The head-dress of the women consists simply of fresh flowers: a profusion of which — among others the beautiful blossoms of the orange — is always easily obtained. An ear-pendant is also worn, — a piece of ivory of about two inches in length, passed through two holes, pierced in the lobe of the ear for this purpose. The pendant hangs horizontally, the two holes balancing it, and keeping it in position. A necklace also of pearl-

shells, shaped into beads, is worn. Sometimes a string of the seeds of the pandanus is added, and an additional ornament is an armlet of mother-o'-pearl, fashioned into the form of a ring. Only the men tattoo themselves; and the process is confined to that portion of the body from the waist to the thighs, which is always covered with the pareu. The practice of tattooing perhaps first originated in the desire to equalize age with youth, and to hide an ugly physiognomy. But the Tongan Islander has no ugliness to conceal, and both men and women have had the good taste to refrain from disfiguring the fair features which nature has so bountifully bestowed upon them. The only marks of tattoo to be seen upon the women are a few fine lines upon the palms of their hands; nor do they disfigure their fair skins with the hideous pigments so much in use among other tribes, of what we are in the habit of terming *savages*.

They anoint the body with a fine oil procured from the cocoanut, and which is also perfumed by various kinds of flowers that are allowed to macerate in the oil; but this toilet is somewhat expensive, and is only practised by the better classes of the community. All, however, both rich and poor, are addicted to habits of extreme cleanliness, and bathing in fresh water is a frequent performance. They object to bathing in the sea; and when they do so, always finish the bath by pouring fresh water over their bodies, — a practice which they allege prevents the skin from becoming rough, which the sea-water would otherwise make it.

House architecture in the Tongan Islands is in rather a backward state. They have produced no Wrens nor Inigo Joneses; but this arises from a natural cause

They have no need for great architects, — scarce any need for houses either, — and only the richer Tongans erect any dwelling more pretentious than a mere shed A few posts of palm-trunks are set up, and upon these are placed the cross-beams, rafters, and roof. Pandanus leaves, or those of the sugar-cane, form the thatch ; and the sides are left open underneath. In the houses of the chiefs and more wealthy people there are walls of pandanus mats, fastened to the uprights ; and some of these houses are of considerable size and neatly built. The interiors are kept scrupulously clean, — the floors being covered with beautiful mats woven in colored patterns, and presenting all the gay appearance of costly carpeting. There are neither chairs nor tables. The men sit tailor-fashion, and the women in a reclining posture, with both limbs turned a little to one side and backwards. A curious enclosure or partition is formed by setting a stiff mat, of about two feet width, upon its edge, — the roll at each end steadying it and keeping it in an upright position.

The utensils to be observed are dishes, bowls, and cups, — usually of calabash or cocoa-shells, — and an endless variety of baskets of the most ingenious plait and construction. The " stool-pillow " is also used ; but differing from that of the Feegees in the horizontal piece having a hollow to receive the head. Many kinds of musical instruments may be seen, — the Pandean pipes, the nose-flute, and various kinds of bamboo drums, all of which have been minutely described by travellers. I am sorry to add that war-clubs and spears for a similar purpose are also to be observed conspicuous among the more useful implements of peace. Bows

and arrows, too, are common; but these are only employed for shooting birds and small rodents, especially rats, that are very numerous and destructive to the crops.

For food, the Tongans have the pig, — the same variety as is so generally distributed throughout the Oceanic Islands. It is stated that the Feegeeans obtained this animal from the Friendly Isles; but I am of opinion that in this case the benefit came the other way, as the *Sus Papua* is more likely to have entered the South Sea from its leeward rather than its windward side. In all likelihood the dog may have been derived from the eastern edge; but the pigs and poultry would seem to be of western origin, — western as regards the position of the Pacific.

The principal food of the Friendly Islanders, however, is of a vegetable nature, and consists of yams, breadfruit, taro, plantains, sweet potatoes, and, in fact, most of those roots and fruits common to the other islands of the Pacific. Fish also forms an important article of their food. They drink the "kava," or juice of the *Piper methisticum* — or rather of its roots chewed to a pulp; but they rarely indulge to that excess observed among the Feegees, and they are not over fond of the drink, except as a means of producing a species of intoxication which gives them a momentary pleasure. Many of them, especially the women, make wry faces while partaking of it; and no wonder they do, for it is at best a disgusting beverage.

The time of the Tongan Islanders is passed pleasantly enough, when there is no wicked war upon hand. The men employ themselves in cultivating the ground or

fishing; and here the woman is no longer the mere slave and drudge — as almost universally elsewhere among savage or even semi-civilized nations. This is a great fact, which tells a wondrous tale — which speaks trumpet-tongued to the credit of the Tongan Islander. Not only do the men share the labor with their more delicate companions, but everything else — their food, conversation, and every enjoyment of life. Both partake alike — eat together, drink together, and join at once in the festive ceremony. In their grand dances — or balls as they might more properly be termed — the women play an important part; and these exhibitions, though in the open air, are got up with an elegance and éclat that would not disgrace the most fashionable ball-room in Christendom. Their dances, indeed, are far more graceful than anything ever seen either at "Almacks" or the "Jardin Mabille."

The principal employment of the men is in the cultivation of their yam and plantain grounds, many of which extend to the size of fields, with fences that would almost appear to have been erected as ornaments. These are of canes, closely set, raised to the height of six feet — wide spaces being left between the fences of different owners to serve as roads for the whole community. In the midst of these fields stand the sheds, or houses, surrounded by splendid forms of tropic vegetation, and forming pictures of a softly beautiful character.

The men also occupy themselves in the construction of their canoes, — to procure the large ones, making a voyage as already stated, to the Feegee Islands, and sometimes remaining absent for several years.

These, however, are usually professional boat-builders, and form but a very small proportion of the forty thousand people who inhabit the different islands of the Tongan archipelago.

The men also occasionally occupy themselves in weaving mats and wicker baskets, and carving fancy toys out of wood and shells; but the chief part of the manufacturing business is in the hands of the women — more especially the making of the tapa-cloth, already so often mentioned. An account of the manufacture may be here introduced, with the proviso, that it is carried on not only by the women of the Feegee group, but by those of nearly all the other Polynesian Islands. There are slight differences in the mode of manufacture, as well as in the quality of the fabric; but the account here given, both of the making and dyeing, will answer pretty nearly for all.

The bark of the malo-tree, or "paper-mulberry," is taken off in strips, as long as possible, and then steeped in water, to facilitate the separation of the epidermis, which is effected by a large volute shell. In this state it is kept for some time, although fit for immediate use. A log, flattened on the upper side, is so fixed as to spring a little, and on this the strips of bark — or *masi*, as it is called — are beaten with an *iki*, or mallet, about two inches square, and grooved longitudinally on three of its sides. Two lengths of the wet *masi* are generally beaten together, in order to secure greater strength — the gluten which they contain being sufficient to keep their fibres united. A two-inch strip can thus be beaten out to the width of a foot and a half; but the length is at the same time reduced. The pieces are neatly

lapped together with the starch of the taro, or arrow-root, boiled whole; and thus reach a length of many yards. The "widths" are also joined by the same means laterally, so as to form pieces of fifteen or thirty feet square, and upon these, the ladies exhaust their ornamenting skill. The middle of the square is printed with a red-brown, by the following process:— Upon a convex board, several feet long, are arranged parallel, at about a finger-width apart, thin straight slips of bamboo, a quarter of an inch wide. By the side of these, curved pieces, formed of the mid-rib of cocoanut leaflets, are arranged. On the board thus prepared the cloth is laid, and rubbed over with a dye obtained from the *lauci (Aleurites triloba)*. The cloth of course, takes the dye upon those parts which receive pressure, being supported by the slips beneath; and thus shows the same pattern in the color employed. A stronger preparation of the same dye, laid on with a sort of brush, is used to divide the square into oblong compartments, with large round or radiated dots in the centre. The *kesa*, or dye, when good, dries bright. Blank borders, two or three feet wide, are still left on two sides of the square; and to elaborate the ornamentation of these, so as to excite applause, is the pride of every lady. There is now an entire change of apparatus. The operator works on a plain board; the red dye gives place to a jet black; the pattern is now formed of a strip of banana-leaf placed on the upper surface of the cloth. Out of the leaf is cut the pattern — not more than an inch long — which the lady wishes to print upon the border, and holds by her first and middle finger, pressing it down with the thumb. Then taking a soft pad of cloth, steeped in the

dye, in her right hand, she rubs it firmly over the stencil, and a fair, sharp figure is made. The practised fingers of the operator move quickly, but it is, after all, a tedious process.

I regret to add, that the men employ themselves in an art of less utility: the manufacture of war weapons — clubs and spears — which the people of the different islands, and even those of the same, too often brandish against one another. This war spirit is entirely owing to their intercourse with the ferocious Feegees, whose boasting and ambitious spirit they are too prone to emulate. In fact, their admiration of the Feegee habits is something surprising; and can only be accounted for by the fact, that while visiting these savages and professed warriors, the Tongans have become imbued with a certain fear of them. They acknowledge the more reckless spirit of their allies, and are also aware that in intellectual capacity the black men are not inferior to themselves. They certainly are inferior in courage, as in every good moral quality; but the Tongans can hardly believe this, since their cruel and ferocious conduct seems to give color to the contrary idea. In fact, it is this that inspires them with a kind of respect, which has no other foundation than a vague sense of fear. Hence they endeavor to emulate the actions that produce this fear, and this leads them to go to war with one another.

It is to be regretted that the missionaries have supplied them with a motive. Their late wars are solely due to missionary influence, — for Methodism upon the Tongan Islands has adopted one of the doctrines of Mahomet, and believes in the faith being propagated by the sword A usurper, who wishes to be king over the

whole group, has embraced the Methodist form of Christianity, and linked himself with its teachers, — who offer to aid him with all their influence; and these formerly peaceful islands now present the painful spectacle of a divided nationality, — the "Christian party," and the "Devil's party." The object of conquest on the part of the former is to place the Devil's party under the absolute sovereignty of a despot, whose laws will be dictated by his missionary ministers. Of the mildness of these laws we have already some specimens, which of course extend only to the "Christianized." One of them, which refers to the mode of wearing the pareu, has been already hinted at, — and another is a still more off-hand piece of legislation: being an edict that no one hereafter shall be permitted to smoke tobacco, under pain of a most severe punishment.

When it is considered that the Tongan Islander enjoys the "weed" (and grows it too) more than almost any other smoker in creation, the severity of the "taboo" may be understood. But it is very certain, if his Methodist majesty were once firmly seated on his throne, *bluer* laws than this would speedily be proclaimed. The American Commodore Wilkes found things in this warlike attitude when he visited the Tongan Islands; but perceiving that the right was clearly on the side of the "Devil's party," declined to interfere; or rather, his interference, which would have speedily brought peace, was rejected by the Christian party, instigated by the sanguinary spirit of their "Christian" teachers. Not so, Captain Croker, of Her Britannic Majesty's service, who came shortly after. This unreflecting officer — loath to believe that royalty could be in the wrong —

at once took side with the king and Christians, and dashed headlong into the affair. The melancholy result is well known. It ended by Captain Croker leaving his body upon the field, alongside those of many of his brave tars; and a disgraceful retreat of the Christian party beyond the reach of their enemies.

This interference of a British war-vessel in the affairs of the Tongan Islanders, offers a strong contrast to our conduct when in presence of the Feegees. There we have the fact recorded of British officers being eye-witnesses of the most horrid scenes, — wholesale murder and cannibalism, — with full power to stay the crime and full authority to punish it, — that authority which would have been freely given them by the accord and acclamation of the whole civilized world, — and yet they stood by, in the character of idle spectators, fearful of breaking through the delicate icy line of *non-intervention!*

A strange theory it seems, that murder is no longer murder, when the murderer and his victim chance to be of a different nationality from our own! It is a distinction too delicate to bear the investigation of the philosophic mind; and perhaps will yet yield to a truer appreciation of the principles of justice. There was no such squeamishness displayed when royalty required support upon the Tongan Islands; nor ever is there when self-interest demands it otherwise. Mercy and justice may both fail to disarrange the hypocritical fallacy of non-intervention; but the principle always breaks down at the call of political convenience.

THE TURCOMANS.

Asia has been remarkable, from the earliest times, for having a large population without any fixed place of residence, but who lead a *nomade* or wandering life. It is not the only quarter of the globe where this kind of people are found: as there are many *nomade* nations in Africa, especially in the northern division of it; and if we take the Indian race into consideration, we find that both the North and South American continents have their tribes of wandering people. It is in Asia, nevertheless, that we find this unsettled mode of life carried out to its greatest extent, — it is there that we find those great pastoral tribes, — or "hordes," as they have been termed, — who at different historical periods have not only increased to the numerical strength of large nationalities, but have also been powerful enough to overrun adjacent empires, pushing their conquests even into Europe itself. Such were the invasions of the Mongols under Zenghis Khan, the Tartars under Timour, and the Turks, whose degenerate descendants now so feebly hold the vast territory won by their wandering ancestors.

The pastoral life, indeed, has its charms, that render

it attractive to the natural disposition of man, and wherever the opportunity offers of following it, this life will be preferred to any other. It affords to man an abundant supply of all his most prominent wants, without requiring from him any very severe exertion, either of mind or body; and, considering the natural indolence of Asiatic people, it is not to be wondered at that so many of them betake themselves to this mode of existence. Their country, moreover, is peculiarly favorable to the development of a pastoral race. Perhaps not one third of the surface of the Asiatic continent is adapted to agriculture. At least one half of it is occupied by treeless, waterless plains, many of which have all the characters of a desert, where an agricultural people could not exist, or, at all events, where their labor would be rewarded by only the most scant and precarious returns.

Even a pastoral people in these regions would find but a sorry subsistence, were they confined to one spot; for the luxurious herbage which, for the most part, characterizes the great savanna plains of America, is either altogether wanting upon the *steppes* of Asia, or at best very meagre and inconstant. A fixed abode is therefore impossible, except in the most fertile tracts or *oases:* elsewhere, the nomad life is a necessity arising from the circumstances of the soil.

It would be difficult to define exactly the limits of the territory occupied by the wandering races in Asia; but in a general way it may be said that the whole central portion of the continent is thus peopled: indeed, much more than the central portion, — for, if we except the rich agricultural countries of Hindostan and China, with

a small portion of Persia, Arabia, and Turkey, the whole of Asia is of this character. The countries known as Balk and Bokara, Yarkand and Khiva, with several others of equal note, are merely the central points of oases, — large towns, supported rather by commerce than by the produce of agriculture, and having nomad tribes dwelling within sight of their walls. Even the present boundaries of Asiatic Turkey, Arabia and Persia, contain within them a large proportion of nomadic population; and the same is true of Eastern Poland and Russia in Europe. A portion of the Affghan and Belochee country is also inhabited by nomad people.

These wandering people are of many different types and races of men; but there is a certain similarity in the habits and customs of all: as might be expected from the similar circumstances in which they are placed.

It is always the more sterile steppes that are thus occupied; and this is easily accounted for: where fertile districts occur the nomad life is no longer necessary. Even a wandering tribe, entering upon such a tract, would no longer have a motive for leaving it, and would soon become attached to the soil, — in other words, would cease to be wanderers; and whether they turned their attention to the pursuit of agriculture, or not, they would be certain to give up their tent-life, and fix themselves in a permanent abode. This has been the history of many Asiatic tribes; but there are many others, again, who from time immemorial, have shown a repugnance to the idea of fixing themselves to the soil. They prefer the free roving life which the desert enables them to indulge in; and wandering from place to place as the choice of pasture guides them, occupy themselves en-

solely in feeding their flocks and herds, — the sole means of their subsistence. These never have been, and never could be, induced to reside in towns or villages.

Nor is it that they have been driven into these desert tracts to seek shelter from political oppression, — as is the case with some of the native tribes of Africa and America. On the contrary, these Asiatic nomads are more often the aggressors than the objects of aggression. It is rather a matter of choice and propensity with them: as with those tribes of the Arabian race, — known as "Bedouins."

The proportion of the Asiatic wandering population to those who dwell in towns, or fixed habitations, varies according to the nature of the country. In many extensive tracts, the former greatly exceed the latter; and the more sterile steppes are almost exclusively occupied by them. In general, they acknowledge the sovereignty of some of the great powers, — such as the empires of China, Russia, and Turkey, the kingdom of Persia, or that of several powerful khans, as those of Khiva and Bokara; but this sovereignty is, for the most part, little more than nominal, and their allegiance is readily thrown off, whenever they desire it. It is rarely so strong, as to enable any of the aforesaid powers to draw a heavy tribute from them; and some of the more warlike of the wandering tribes are much courted and caressed, — especially when their war services are required. In general they claim an herditary right to the territories over which they roam, and pay but little heed to the orders of either king, khan, or emperor.

As already stated, these wandering people are of different races; in fact, they are of nearly all the varieties

indigenous to the Asiatic continent; and a whole catalogue of names might be given, of which Mongols, Tartars, Turcomans, Usbecks, Kirghees, and Calmucks, are perhaps the most generally known. It has been also stated that in many points they are alike; but there are also many important particulars in which they differ,—physical, moral, and intellectual. Some of the "hordes," or tribes, are purely pastoral in their mode of life, and of mild and hospital dispositions, exceedingly fond of strangers, and kind to such as come among them. Others again are averse to all intercourse with others, than those of their own race and religion, and are shy, if not inhospitable, when visited by strangers. But there is a class of a still less creditable character,—a large number of tribes that are not only inhospitable, and hostile to strangers, but as ferocious and bloodthirsty as any savages in Africa, America, or the South-Sea Islands.

As a fair specimen of this class we select the Turcomans; in fact, they may be regarded as its *type;* and our description henceforward may be regarded as applying particularly to these people.

The country of the Turcomans will be found upon the map without difficulty; but to define its exact boundary would be an impossibility, since none such exists. Were you to travel along the whole northern frontier of Persia, almost from the gates of Teheran to the eastern frontier of the kingdom,—or even farther towards Balk,—you would be pretty sure of hearing of Turcoman robbers, and in very great danger of being plundered by them,—which last misfortune would be of less importance, as it would only be the prelude to your being either murdered on the spot, or carried off by them into captivity. In

making this journey along the northern frontier of Persia, you would become acquainted with the whereabouts of the Turcoman hordes; or rather you would discover that the whole north part of Persia, — a good broad band of it extending hundreds of miles into its interior, — if not absolutely in possession of the Turcomans, is overrun and plundered by them at will. This, however, is not their home, — it is only their "stamping-ground," — the home of their victims. Their place of habitual residence lies further to the north, and is defined with tolerable accuracy by its having the whole eastern shore of the Caspian Sea for its western border, while the Amou River (the ancient Oxus) may be generally regarded as the limit of their range towards the east. Some tribes go still further east than the Amou; but those more particularly distinguished for their plundering habits dwell within the limits described, — north of the Elburz Mountains, and on the great steppe of Kaurezm, where they are contiguous to the Usbeck community of Khiva.

The whole of this immense territory, stretching from the eastern shore of the Caspian to the Amou and Aral Sea, may be characterized as a true desert. Here and there oases exist, but none of any importance, save the country of Khiva itself: and even that is but a mere irrigated strip, lying on both banks of the Oxus. Indeed, it is difficult to believe that this territory of Khiva, so insignificant in superficial extent, could have been the seat of a powerful empire, as it once was.

The desert, then, between the Caspian Sea and the Oxus River may be regarded as the true land of the Turcomans, and is usually known as Turcomania. It

is to be remembered, however, that there are some kindred tribes not included within the boundaries of Turcomania — for the Turkistan of the geographers is a country of much larger extent; besides, an important division of the Turcoman races are settlers, or rather wanderers in Armenia. To Turcomania proper, then, and its inhabitants, we shall confine our remarks.

We shall not stay to inquire into the origin of the people now called Turcomans. Were we to speculate upon that point, we should make but little progress in an account of their habits and mode of living. They are usually regarded as of Tartar origin, or of Usbeck origin, or of Mongolian race; and in giving this account of them, I am certain that I add very little to your knowledge of what they really are. The truth is, that the words Tartar and Mongol and some half-dozen other titles, used in relation to the Asiatic races, are without any very definite signification, — simply because the relative distinctions of the different nations of that continent are very imperfectly known; and learned ethnologists are ever loath to a confession of limited knowledge. One of this class, Mr. Latham, — who requires only a few words of their language to decide categorically to what variety of the human race a people belongs, — has unfortunately added to this confusion by pronouncing nearly everybody *Mongolian:* placing the proud turbaned Turk in juxtaposition with the squat and stunted Laplander! Of course this is only bringing us back to the old idea, that all men are sprung from a single pair of first parents, — a doctrine, which, though popular, is difficult to reconcile with the rational knowledge derived from ethnological investigation.

It matters little to our present purpose from what original race the Turcoman has descended: whether he be a true Turk, as some regard him, or whether he is a descendant of the follows of the Great Khan of the Tartars. He possesses the Tartar physiognomy to a considerable extent — some of the tribes more than others being thus distinguished, — and high cheek-bones, flat noses, small oblique eyes, and scanty beards, are all characteristics that are very generally observed. Some of these peculiarities are more common among the women than the men — many of the latter being tall, stout, and well-made, while a large number may be seen who have the regular features of a Persian. Perhaps it would be safest to consider the present Turcoman tribes as not belonging to a pure stock, but rather an admixture of several; and their habit of taking slaves from other nations, which has for a long time existed among them, would give probability to this idea. At all events, without some such hypothesis, it is difficult to account for the wonderful variety, both in feature and form, that is found among them. Their complexion is swarthy, in some cases almost brown as that of an American Indian; but constant exposure to the open air, in all sorts of weather, has much to do in darkening the hue of their skin. The newborn children are nearly as white as those of the Persians; and their young girls exhibit a ruddy brunette tint, which some consider even more pleasing than a perfectly white complexion.

The costume of the Turcoman, like that of most Oriental nations, is rich and picturesque. The dress of the men varies according to rank. Some of the very poorer

people wear nothing but a short woollen tunic or shirt, with a pair of coarse woollen drawers. Others, in place of this shirt, are clad in a longer garment, a sort of robe or wrapper, like a gentleman's dressing-gown, made of camel's-hair cloth, or some coarse brown woollen stuff. But the true Turcoman costume, and that worn by all who can afford it, consists of a garment of mixed silk and cotton, — the *baronnee*, — which descends below the knee, and though open in front, is made to button over the breast quite up to the neck. A gay sash around the waist adds to the effect; and below the skirt are seen trowsers of cotton or even silk. Cloth wrappers around the legs serve in the place of boots or gaiters; and on the feet are worn slippers of Persian fashion, with socks of soft Koordish leather.

As the material of which the baronnee is made is of good quality — a mixture of silk and cotton — and as the fabric is always striped or checkered in colors of red, blue, purple, and green, the effect produced is that of a certain picturesqueness. The head-dress adds to this appearance — being a high fur cap, with truncated top, the fur being that beautiful kind obtained from the skins of the Astracan lamb, well known in commerce. These caps are of different colors, either black, red, or gray. Another style of head-dress much worn is a round-topped or helmet-shaped cap, made of quilted cotton-stuff; but this kind, although in use among the Turcomans, is a more characteristic costume of their enemies, the "Koords," who wear it universally.

The "jubba" is a kind of robe generally intended to go over the other garments, and is usually of woollen or camel's-hair cloth. It is also made like a dressing

gown, with wide sleeves, — tight, however, around the wrist. It is of ample dimensions, and one side is lapped over the other across the front, like a double-breasted coat. The "jubba" is essentially a national garment.

The dress of the women is exceedingly picturesque. It is thus minutely described by a traveller: —

"The head-dress of these women is singular enough: most of them wear a lofty cap, with a broad crown, resembling that of a soldier's cap called a shako. This is stuck upon the back of the head; and over it is thrown a silk handkerchief of very brilliant colors, which covers the top, and falls down on each side like a veil. The front of this is covered with ornaments of silver and gold, in various shapes; more frequently gold coins, mohrs, or tomauns, strung in rows, with silver bells or buttons, and chains depending from them; hearts and other fanciful forms, with stones set in them. The whole gives rather the idea of gorgeous trappings for a horse, than ornaments for a female.

"The frames of these monstrous caps are made of light chips of wood, or split reeds, covered with cloth; and when they do not wear these, they wrap a cloth around their heads in the same form; and carelessly throw another, like a veil over it. The veil or curtain above spoken of covers the mouth; descending to the breast. Earrings are worn in the ears; and their long hair is divided, and plaited into four parts, disposed two on each side; one of which falls down behind the shoulders and one before, and both are strung with a profusion of gold ornaments, agates, cornelians, and other stones, according to the means and quality of the wearer. The rest of their dress consists of a long, loose

vest or shirt, with sleeves, which covers the whole person down to the feet, and is open at the breast, in front, but buttons or ties close up to the neck: this is made of silk or cotton-stuff, red, blue green, striped red, and yellow, checked, or various-colored: underneath this, are the zere-jameh, or drawers, also of silk or cotton; and some wear a short *peerahn* or shirt of the same. This, I believe, is all; but in the cold weather they wear, in addition, jubbas, or coats like those of the men, of striped stuff made of silk and cotton; on their feet they generally wear slippers like those of the Persian women."

The tents, or "portable houses" of the Turcomans — as their movable dwellings rather deserve to be called — differ from most structures of the kind in use elsewhere. They are thus described by the same intelligent traveller: —

"The portable wooden houses of the Turcomans have been referred to by several writers; but I am not aware that any exact description of their structure has been given. The frame is curiously constructed of light wood, disposed in laths of about an inch broad by three quarters thick, crossing one another diagonally, but at right angles, about a foot asunder, and pinned at each crossing with thongs of raw hide, so as to be movable; and the whole framework may be closed up or opened in the manner of those toys for children that represent a company of soldiers, and close or expand at will, so as to form open or close column.

"One or more pieces thus constructed being stretched out, surround a circular space of from fifteen to twenty feet diameter; and form the skeleton of the walls, —

which are made firm by bands of hair or woollen ropes, hitched round the end of each rod, to secure it in its position. From the upper ends of these, rods of a similar kind, bent near the wall end into somewhat less than a right angle, are so disposed that the longer portions slope to the centre, and being tied with ropes, form the framework of a roof. Over this is thrown a covering of black *numud*, leaving in the centre a large hole to give vent to the smoke, and light to the dwelling. Similar numuds are wrapped round the walls; and outside of these, to keep all tight, is bound another frame, formed of split reeds or cane, or of very light and tough wood, tied together with strong twine, the pieces being perpendicular. This is itself secured by a strong, broad band of woven hair-stuff, which firmly unites. The large round opening at top is covered, as occasion requires, by a piece of numud, which is drawn off or on by a strong cord, like a curtain. If the wind be powerful, a stick is placed to leeward, which supports the fabric.

"In most of these houses they do not keep a carpet or numud constantly spread; but the better classes use a carpet shaped somewhat in the form of a horseshoe, having the centre cut out for the fireplace, and the ends truncated, that those of inferior condition, or who do not choose to take off their boots, may sit down upon the ground. Upon this carpet they place one or two other numuds, as may be required, for guests of distinction. When they have women in the tent, a division of split reeds is made for their convenience; but the richer people have a separate tent for their private apartments.

"The furniture consists of little more than that of the

camels and horses; *joals*, or bags in which their goods are packed, and which are often made of a very handsome species of worsted velvet carpet, of rich patterns the swords, guns, spears, bows and arrows, and other implements of the family, with odds and ends of every description, may be seen hung on the ends of the wooden rods, which form very convenient pins for the purpose. Among some tribes all the domestic utensils are made of wood, — calleeoons, trays for presenting food, milk-vessels, &c.: among others, all these things are formed of clay or metal. Upon the black tops of the tents may frequently be seen large white masses of sour curd, expressed from buttermilk, and set to dry as future store; this, broken down and mixed with water, forms a very pleasant acidulous drink, and is used as the basis of that intoxicating beverage called *kimmiz*. The most common and most refreshing drink which they offer to the weary and over-heated traveller in the forenoon is buttermilk, or sour curds and water; and, indeed, a modification of this, with some other simple sherbets, are the only liquors presented at their meals.

"Such are the wooden houses of the Turcomans, one of which just makes a camel's load. There are poorer ones, of a less artificial construction, the framework of which is formed of reeds.

"The encampment is generally square, enclosing an open space, or forming a broad street, the houses being ranged on either side, with their doors towards each other. At these may always be seen the most picturesque groups, occupied with their various domestic duties, or smoking their simple wooden *calleeoons*. The more important encampments are often surrounded by

a fence of reeds, which serve to protect the flocks from petty thefts."

It is now our place to inquire how the Turcomans occupy their time. We have already described them as a pastoral and nomadic people; and, under ordinary circumstances, their employment consists in looking after their flocks. In a few of the more fertile oases they have habitations, or rather camps, of a more permanent character, where they cultivate a little corn or barley, to supply them with the material for bread; but these settlements, if they deserve the name, are only exceptional; and are used chiefly as a kind of head-quarters, where the women and property are kept, while the men themselves are absent on their thieving expeditions. More generally their herds are kept on the move, and are driven from place to place at short intervals of a few weeks or even days. The striking and pitching of their tents gives them employment; to which is added that of milking the cattle, and making the cheese and butter. The women, moreover, fill up their idle hours in weaving the coarse blankets, or "numuds," in plaiting mats, and manufacturing various articles of dress or household use. The more costly parts of their costume, however, are not of native manufacture: these are obtained by trade. The men alone look after the camels and horses, taking special care of the latter.

Their flocks present a considerable variety of species. Besides horses, cattle, and sheep, they own many camels, and they have no less than three distinct varieties of this valuable animal in their possession, — the dromedary with two humps, and the common camel. The third sort is a cross breed — or "mule" — between these two. The

dromedary is slightly made, and swifter than either of the others, but it is not so powerful as either, and being inferior as a beast of burden, is least cared for by the Turcomans. The one-humped camel is in more general use, and a good one will carry a load of six or seven hundred pounds with ease. The mule camel is more powerful than either of its parents, and also more docile and capable of greater endurance. It grows to a very large size, but is low in proportion to its bulk, with stout, bony legs, and a large quantity of coarse, shaggy hair on its haunch, shoulders, neck, and even on the crown of its head, which gives it a strange, somewhat fantastic appearance. Its color varies from light gray to brown, though it is as often nearly black. This kind of camel will carry a load of from eight hundred to a thousand pounds.

The Turcoman sheep are of the large-tailed breed, — their tails often attaining enormous dimensions. This variety of sheep is a true denizen of the desert, the fat tail being unquestionably a provision of nature against seasons of hunger, — just as in the single protuberance, or "hump," upon the camel.

The horse of the Turcoman is the animal upon which he sets most value. The breed possessed by him is celebrated over all Eastern Asia, as that of the Arab is in the West. They cannot be regarded, however, as handsome horses, according to the true standard of "horse beauty;" but the Turcomar cares less for this than for other good qualities. In point of speed and endurance they are not excelled, if equalled, by the horses of any other country.

Their size is that of the common English horse, but

they are very different in make. Their bodies are long in proportion to the bulk of carcass; and they do not appear to possess sufficient compactness of frame. Their legs are also long, generally falling off in muscular development below the knee-joint; and they would appear to an English jockey too narrow in the counter. They have also long necks, with large heavy heads. These are the points which are generally observed in the Turcoman horses; but it is to be remarked, that it is only when in an under-condition they look so ungraceful; and in this condition their owners are accustomed to keep them, especially when they have any very heavy service to perform. Feeding produces a better shape, and brings them much nearer to the look of a well-bred English horse.

Their powers of endurance are indeed, almost incredible: when trained for a chappow, or plundering expedition, they will carry their rider and provisions for seven or eight days together, at the rate of twenty or even thirty fursungs — that is, from eighty to one hundred miles — a day. Their mode of training is more like that of our pugilistic and pedestrian performers, than that adopted for race-horses. When any expedition of great length, and requiring the exertion of much speed, is in contemplation, they commence by running their horses every day for many miles together; they feed them sparingly on barley alone, and pile numuds upon them at night to sweat them, until every particle of fat has been removed, and the flesh becomes hard and tendonous. Of this they judge by the feel of the muscles, particularly on the crest, at the back of the neck, and on the haunches; and when these are sufficiently firm and

hard, they say in praise of the animal, that "his flesh is marble." After this sort of training, the horse will proceed with expedition and perseverance, for almost any length of time, without either falling off in condition or knocking up, while horses that set out fat seldom survive. They are taught a quick walk, a light trot, or a sort of amble, which carries the rider on easily, at the rate of six miles an hour; but they will also go at a round canter, or gallop, for forty or fifty miles, without ever drawing bridle or showing the least symptom of fatigue. Their *yaboos*, or galloways, and large ponies are fully as remarkable, if not superior, to their horses, in their power of sustaining fatigue; they are stout, compact, spirited beasts, without the fine blood of the larger breeds, but more within the reach of the poorer classes, and consequently used in by far greater numbers than the superior and more expensive horses.

"It is a common practice of the Turcomans to teach their horses to fight with their heels, and thus assist their masters in the time of action. At the will of their riders they will run at and lay hold with their teeth of whatever man or animal may be before them. This acquirement is useful in the day of battle and plunder, for catching prisoners and stray cattle, but it at the same time renders them vicious and dangerous to be handled."

In addition to the flocks and herds, the Turcomans possess a breed of very large fierce dogs, to assist them in keeping their cattle. These are also necessary as watch-dogs, to protect the camp from thieves as well as more dangerous enemies to their peace; and so well trained are those faithful creatures, that it would be

impossible for either friend or enemy to approach a Turcoman camp without the inmates being forewarned in time. Two or three of these dogs may always be seen lying by the entrance of each tent; and throughout the night several others keep sentry at the approaches to the camp.

Other breeds of dogs owned by them are used for hunting, — for these wild wanderers sometimes devote their hours to the chase. They have two sorts, — a smooth-skinned dog, half hound half pointer, that hunts chiefly by the scent; and a greyhound, of great swiftness, with a coat of long, silky hair, which they make use of in coursing, — hares and antelopes being their game.

They have a mode of hunting — also practised by the Persians — which is peculiar. It should rather be termed hawking than hunting, as a hawk is employed for the purpose. It is a species of falcon denominated "goork," and is trained not only to dash at small game, such as partridges and bustards, but upon antelopes and even the wild ass that is found in plenty upon the plains of Turcomania. You will wonder how a bird, not larger than the common falcon, could capture such game as this; but it will appear simple enough when the method has been explained. The "goork" is trained to fly at the quadruped, and fix its claws in one particular place, — that is, upon the frontlet, just between the eyes. When thus attached, the bird, instead of closing its wings and remaining at rest, keeps them constantly in motion, flapping them over the eyes of the quadruped. This it does, no doubt, to enable it to retain its perch; while the unfortunate animal, thus assailed, knows not in what

direction to run, and is soon overtaken by the pursuing sportsmen, and either speared or shot with the bow and arrow.

Wild boars are frequently hunted by the Turcomans and this, like everything else with these rude centaurs, is performed on horseback. The bow and arrow is but a poor weapon when employed against the thick, tough hide of the Hyrcanian boar (for he is literally the Hyrcanian boar), and of course the matchlock would be equally ineffective. How, then, does the Turcoman sportsman manage to bag this bristly game? With all the ease in the world. It costs him only the effort of galloping his horse close up to the side of the boar after he has been brought to by the dogs, and then suddenly wheeling the steed. The latter, well trained to the task, without further prompting, goes through the rest of the performance, which consists in administering to the boar such a slap with his iron-shod heel, as to prostrate the porcine quadruped, often killing it on the instant!

Such employments and such diversions occupy only a small portion of the Turcoman's time. He follows another calling of a far less creditable character, which unfortunately he regards as the most honorable occupation of his life. This is the calling of the robber. His pastoral pursuits are matters of only secondary consideration. He only looks to them as a means of supplying his daily wants, — his food and the more necessary portion of his clothing; but he has other wants that may be deemed luxuries. He requires to keep up his stock of horses and camels, and wishes to increase them. He needs costly gear for his horse, and costly garments for himself, — and he is desirous of being possessed of

fine weapons, such as spears, swords, bows, matchlocks, daggers. and pistols. His most effective weapons are the spear and sword, and these are the kinds he chiefly uses

His spear consists of a steel head with four flutes, and edges very sharp, fixed upon a slender shaft of from eight to ten feet in length. In using it he couches it under the left arm, and directs it with the right hand, either straightforward, or to the right or left; if to the right, the butt of the shaft lies across the hinder part of the saddle; if to the left, the forepart of the spear rests on the horse's neck. The Turcomans manage their horses with the left hand, but most of these are so well broken as to obey the movement of the knee, or the impulse of the body. When close to their object, they frequently grasp the spear with both hands, to give greater effect to the thrust. The horse, spurred to the full speed of a charge, in this way, offers an attack no doubt very formidable in appearance, but perhaps less really dangerous than the other, in which success depends so greatly on skill and address. The Turcomans are all sufficiently dexterous with the sword, which is almost universally formed in the curved Persian fashion, and very sharp; they also wear a dagger at the waist-belt. Firearms are as yet little in use among them; they possess a few, taken from the travellers they have plundered, and procure a few more occasionally from the Russians by the way of Bokara. Some use bows and arrows, but they are by no means so dexterous as their ancestors were in the handling of those weapons.

Mounted, then, upon his matchless steed, and armed with spear and sword, the Turcoman goes forth to prac-

tise his favorite profession, — that of plunder. He does not go alone, nor with a small number of his comrades, either. The number depends altogether on the distance or danger of the expedition; and where these are considered great, a troop of five hundred, or even a thousand, usually proceed together upon their errand.

You will be inquiring to what point they direct themselves, — east, west, north, or south? That altogether depends upon who may be their enemies for the time, for along with their desire for booty, there is also mixed up something like a sentiment of hostility. In this respect, however, the Turcoman is a true Ishmaelite, and in lack of other victim he will not hesitate to plunder the people of a kindred race. Indeed, several of the Turcoman tribes have long been at war with one another; and their animosity is quite as deadly among themselves as when directed against strangers to their race. The *butt*, however, of most of the Turcoman expeditions is the northern part of Persia, — Korassan in particular. It is into this province that most of their great forays are directed, either against the peaceful citizens of the Persian towns and villages, or as often against the merchant caravans that are constantly passing between Teheran and the cities of the east, — Mushed, Balkh, Bokara, Herat, and Kelat. I have already stated that these forays are pushed far into the interior of Persia; and the fact of Persia permitting such a state of things to continue will perhaps surprise you; but you would not be surprised were you better acquainted with the condition of that kingdom. From historic associations, you believe Persia to be a powerful nation; and so it once was, both powerful and prosperous. That day is past.

and at the present hour, this decaying monarchy is not only powerless to maintain order within its own borders, but is even threatened with annihilation from those very nomad races that have so often given laws to the great empires of Asia. Even at this moment, the more powerful Tartar Khans turn a longing look towards the tottering throne of Nadir Shah; and he of Khiva has more than once made a feint at invasion. But the subject is too extensive to be discussed here. It is only introduced to explain with what facility a few hundreds of Turcoman robbers can enter and harass the land. We find a parallel in many other parts of the world, — old as well as new. In the latter, the northern provinces of Mexico, and the southern countries of La Plata and Paraguay, are in just such a condition: the weak, worn-out descendants of the Spanish conquerors on one side, well representing the remnants of the race of Nadir Shah; while, on the other, the Turcoman is type enough of the Red Indian. The comparison, however, is not just to the latter. He, at least, is possessed of courage and prowess; while the Turcoman, notwithstanding his propensities for plunder, and the bloodthirsty ferocity of his character, is as arrant a coward as ever carried lance. Even the Persian can cope with him, when fairly matched; and the merchant-caravans, — which are usually made up of true Turks, and other races possessing a little "pluck," are never attacked, unless when outnumbered in the ratio of three to one.

For all this, the whole northern portion of the Persian kingdom is left to the mercy of these desert-robbers. The towns and villages have each their large fortress, into which the people retire whenever the plunderers

make their appearance, and there dwell till the latter have ridden away, — driving off their flocks and herds to the desert fastnesses. Even the poor farmer is obliged to build a fortress in the middle of his fields, to which he may retire upon the occasion of any sudden alarm, and his laborers till the ground with their swords by their sides, and their matchlocks lying near!

These field fortresses of Korassan are altogether so curious, both as to construction and purpose, that we cannot pass them without a word of description. They are usually placed in some conspicuous place, at a convenient distance from all parts of the cultivated tract They are built of mud, and raised to a height of fifteen or twenty feet, of a circular form, — bearing some resemblance to the well-known round towers of Ireland. A small aperture is left open at the bottom, through which those seeking shelter may just squeeze their bodies, and this being barricaded inside, the defence is complete. From the top — which can be reached easily on the inside — the farmer and his laborers can use their matchlocks with effect; but they are never called upon to do so, — as the cowardly freebooter takes good care to give the mud tower a wide birth. He has no weapons by which he might assail it; and, moreover, he has no time for sieges: since an hour's delay might bring him into danger from the force that is fast approaching. His only thought is to keep on his course, and sweep off such cattle, or make prisoners of such people as he may chance to find unwarned and unarmed. Now and then he ventures upon an attack — where there is much booty to tempt him, and but a weak force to defend it. His enemies, — the hated

"Kuzzilbashes," as he calls the Persians, — if defeated, have no mercy to expect from him. All who resist are killed upon the spot, and often torture is the mode of their death; but if they can be made prisoners, the desert-robber prefers letting them live, as a captive is to him a more valuable consideration than the death of an enemy. His prisoner, once secured, knows tolerably well what is to follow. The first thing the Turcoman does is to bind the victim's hands securely behind his back; he then puts a long halter around his neck, attaching the other end of it to the tail of his horse, and in this fashion the homeward march commences. If the poor pedestrian does not keep pace with the horse, he knows what he may expect, — to be dragged at intervals along the ground, and perhaps torn to pieces upon the rocks. With this horrid fate before his fancy, he makes efforts almost superhuman to keep pace with the troop of his inhuman captors: though well aware that they are leading him off into a hopeless bondage.

At night, his feet are also tied; and, thrown down upon the earth, he is covered with a coarse "numud." Do not fancy that this is done to screen him from the cold: the object is very different indeed. The numud is placed over him in order that two of his captors may sleep upon its edges — one on each side of him — thus holding him down, and frustrating any chance of escape.

On arriving at the robber-camp, the captive is not kept long in suspense as to his future fate. His owner — for he is now in reality a slave — wants a new sword, or a piece of silken cloth, or a camel, or some other article of luxury. That he can obtain either at Khiva or Bokara, in exchange for his slave; and therefore the

new captive — or captives, as the chance may be — is marched off to the ready market. This is no isolated nor rare incident. It is one of everyday occurrence; and it is a noted fact, that of the three hundred thousand people who constitute the subjects of the Khivan Khan, nearly one half are Persian slaves obtained from the robbers of Turcomania!

The political organization of the Turcomans is of the patriarchal character. From necessity they dwell in small communities that are termed "teers," the literal signification of which is "arrows," — though for what reason they are so styled does not appear. Perhaps it is on account of the rapidity of their movements: for, in hostile excursions, or moving from place to place, they proceed with a celerity that may be compared to arrows.

Over each tribe or teer there is a chief, similar to the "sheik" of the Arab tribes, — and indeed, many of their customs offer a close analogy to those of the wandering Bedouins of Arabia and Egypt, and the Kabyles of Morocco and the Algerine provinces. The circumstances of life — almost alike to both — could not fail to produce many striking resemblances.

The Turcoman tribes, as already observed, frequently go to war with each other, but they oftener unite to rob the common enemy, — the caravan or the Persian village. In these mere plundering expeditions they go in such numbers as the case may require; but when called forth to take side in anything like a national war, they can muster to the strength of many thousands; and then indeed, they become terrible, — even to the most potent sovereigns of Central Asia, by whom much diplomacy

is employed to enlist them on one side or the other. It matters little to them what the cause be, — he who can promise them the largest booty in cattle or slaves is sure to have the help of their spears and swords.

The Turcomans are not Pagans, — that is, they are not professedly so, — though, for all the regard which they pay to religious observances, they might as well be termed true Infidels. They profess a religion, however, and that is Mohametanism in its worst and most bigoted form, — the "Sunnite." The Persians, as is well known, hold the milder Sheean doctrines; and as the votaries of the two, in most countries where both are practised, cordially hate each other, so it is between Turcomans and Persians. The former even scorn the Persian creed, calling its followers "Infidel" dogs, or *Kuzzilbashes;* and this bigoted rancor gives them a sort of plausible excuse for the hostile attitude which they hold towards them.

Taking them upon the whole, the Turcomans may be looked upon as true savages, — savages dressed in *silk* instead of in *skins*.

THE OTTOMACS, OR DIRT-EATERS

On the banks of the Orinoco, a short distance above the point where that mighty river makes its second great sweep to the eastward, dwells a remarkable people, — a tribe of savages that, even among savages, are remarkable for many peculiar and singular customs. These are the *Ottomacs*.

They have been long known, — and by the narratives of the early Spanish missionaries, rendered notorious, — on account of some curious habits; but although the missionaries have resided among them, and endeavored to bring them within "sound of the bell," their efforts have met with a very partial and temporary success and at this present hour, the Ottomacs are as savage in their habits, and as singular in their customs, as they were in the days of Columbus.

The Ottomacs are neither a stunted nor yet a weak race of men. Their bodies are strong, and their arms and limbs stout and muscular; but they are remarkably ill-featured, with an expression of countenance habitually stern and vindictive.

Their costume is easily described, or rather cannot be described at all, since they have *none*. Both sexes go

entirely naked, — if we except a little belt of three or four inches in width, made from cotton or the bark of trees, and called the *guayuco*, which they wear around the waist, — but even this is worn from no motives of modesty.

What they regard in the light of a costume is a coat of paint, and about this they are as nice and particular as a Parisian dandy. Talk about "blooming up" a faded *belle* for the ball-room, or the time spent by an exquisite in adjusting the tie of his cravat! these are trifles when compared with the lengthy and elaborate toilette of an Ottomac lady or gentleman.

The greater part of a day is often spent by them in a single dressing, with one or two helpers to assist in the operation; and this is not a *tattooing* process, intended to last for a lifetime, but a costume certain to be disfigured, or entirely washed off, at the first exposure to a heavy shower of rain. Add to this, that the pigments which are used for the purpose are by no means easily obtained: the vegetable substances which furnish them are scarce in the Ottomac country; and it costs one of these Indians the produce of several days of his labor to purchase sufficient paint to give his whole skin a single "coat." For this reason the Ottomac paints his body only on grand occasions, — contenting himself at ordinary times with merely staining his face and hair.

When an Ottomac wishes to appear in "full dress" he first gives himself a "priming" of red. This consists of the dye called "annotto," which is obtained from the fruit pulp of the *Bixa orellana*, and which the Indians knew how to prepare previous to their intercourse with Europeans. Over this red ground is then formed a lat

tice-work of lines of black, with a dot in the centre of every little square or diamond. The black dye is the "caruto," also a vegetable pigment, obtained from the *Genipa Americana*. If the gentleman be rich enough to possess a little "chica" which is a beautiful lake-colored red, — also the produce of a plant, — the *Bignoni, chica*, he will then feel all the ecstatic delight of a fashionable dandy who possesses a good wardrobe; and, with half a pound of turtle-oil rubbed into his long black tresses, he will regard himself as dressed "within an inch of his life." It is not always, however, that he can afford the *chica*, — for it is one of the costliest materials of which a South American savage can manufacture his suit.

The Ottomac takes far less trouble in the building of his house. Very often he builds none; but when he wishes to guard his body from the rays of the sun, or the periodical rains, he constructs him a slight edifice — a mere hut — out of saplings or bamboos, with a thatch of palm-leaves.

His arms consist of the universal bow and arrows, which he manages with much dexterity; and he has also a harpoon which he employs in killing the manatee and the alligator. He has, besides, several other weapons, to aid him in the chase and fishing, — the latter of which forms his principal employment as well as his chief source of subsistence.

The Ottomac belongs to one of those tribes of Indians termed by the Spanish missionaries *Indios andantes*, that is "wandering," or "vagabond Indians," who instead of remaining in fixed and permanent villages, roam about from place to place, as necessity or inclination dictates

Perhaps this arises from the peculiarity of the country which they inhabit: for the *Indios andantes* do not live in the thick forests, but upon vast treeless savannas, which stretch along the Orinoco above its great bend. In these tracts the "juvia" trees (*bertholletia* and *lecythys*), which produce the delicious "Brazil-nuts" — and other plants that supply the savage spontaneously with food, are sparsely found; and as the savannas are annually inundated for several months, the Ottomac is forced, whether he will or no, to shift his quarters and try for subsistence elsewhere. When the inundations have subsided and the waters become settled enough to permit of fishing, the Ottomac "winter" is over, and he can obtain food in plenty from the alligators, the manatees, the turtles, the *toninas* or dolphins, and other large fish that frequent the great stream upon which he dwells. Of these the *manatee* is the most important in the eyes of the Ottomac — as it is the largest in size, and consequently furnishes him with the greatest amount of meat.

This singular semi-cetaceous creature is almost too well known to require description. It is found in nearly all the large rivers of tropical America, where it feeds upon the grass and aquatic plants growing along their banks. It is known by various names, according to the place and people. The Spaniards call it *vaca marina*, or "sea-cow," and the Portuguese *peixe boi*, or "fish-ox," — both being appellations equally inappropriate, and having their origin in a slight resemblance which there exists between the animal's "countenance" and that of an ox.

The West Indian name is the one we have given,

though the true orthography is *manati*, not *manatee*, since the word is of Indian origin. Some writers deny this, alleging that it is a derivative from the Spanish word "mano," a hand, signifying, therefore, the fish with hands, — in allusion to the rudimentary hands which form one of its distinguishing characteristics. This is the account of the historian Oviedo, but another Spanish missionary, Father Gili, offers a more correct explanation of the name, — in fact, he proves, what is neither more nor less than the simple truth, that "manati" was the name given to this animal by the natives of Hayti and Cuba, — where a species is also found, — and the word has no reference whatever to the "hands" of the creature. The resemblance to the Spanish word which should signify "handed," is merely an accidental circumstance; and, as the acute Humboldt very justly remarks, according to the genius of the Spanish language, the word thus applied would have been written *manudo*, or *manon*, and not *manati*.

The Indians have almost as many different names for this creature as there are rivers in which it is found; but its appellation in the "lingo ageral" of the great Amazon valley, is "juarua." Among the Ottomacs it is called the "apoia." It may be safely affirmed that there are several species of this amphibious animal in the rivers of tropical America; and possibly no one of them is identical with that of the West Indies. All have hitherto been regarded as belonging to the same species, and described under the scientific title of *Manatus Americanus* — a name given to the American manati, to distinguish it from the "lamantin" of Africa, and the "dugong" of the East Indian seas. But the

West Indian species appears to have certain characteristic differences, which shows that it is a separate one, or, at all events, a variety. It is of much larger size than those of the South American rivers generally are — though there also a large variety is found, but much rarer than those commonly captured by the fishermen. The West Indian manati has nails well developed upon the outer edge of its fins, or forearms; while those on the other kinds are either not seen at all, or only in a very rudimentary state. That there are different species, may be deduced from the accounts of the natives, who employ themselves in its capture: and the observations of such people are usually more trustworthy than the speculations of learned anatomists. The Amazon fishermen all agree in the belief that there are three kinds of manati in the Amazon and its numerous tributaries, that not only differ greatly in size — from seven to twenty feet long — and in weight, from four hundred to two thousand pounds, — but also in the color of their skin, and the shape of their tails and fins. The species found in the Orinoco, and called "apoia" by the Ottomacs, is usually about twelve feet in length, and weighs from five hundred to eight hundred pounds; but now and then a much larger individual is captured, perhaps owing to greater age, or other accidental circumstance. Humboldt heard of one that weighed eight thousand pounds; and the French naturalist D'Orbigny speaks of one killed in the Bolivian waters of the Amazon that was twenty feet in length. This size is often attained by the *Manatus Americanus* of Cuba and Hayti.

The manati is shaped somewhat like a huge seal, and

has certain resemblances to a fish. Its body is of an oval oblong, with a large, flat, rounded tail, set horizontally, and which serves as a rudder to direct its course in the water. Just behind its shoulders appear, instead of fins, a pair of flippers, which have a certain resemblance to hands set on to the body without arms. Of these it avails itself, when creeping out against the bank, and the female also uses them in carrying her young. The mammæ (for it must be remembered that this creature is a mammiferous animal) are placed just below and behind the flippers. The muzzle is blunt, with thick lips, — the upper projecting several inches beyond the lower, and covered with a delicate epidermis: showing evidently that it avails itself of this prominence — which possesses a keen sense of touch — just as the elephant of his proboscis. The lips are covered with bristles, or beard, which impart a kind of human-like expression to the animal's countenance, — a circumstance more observable in the "dugongs" of the Oriental waters. "Woman-fish," too, these have been called, and no doubt such creatures, along with the seals and walruses, have given rise to many a story of sirens and mermaids. The "cow-face," however, from which the manati obtains its Spanish and Portuguese epithets, is the most characteristic; and in its food we find a still greater analogy to the bovine quadruped with which it is brought in comparison. Beyond this the resemblance ceases. The body is that of a seal; but instead of being covered with hair, as the cetaceous animal, the manati has a smooth skin that resembles india-rubber more than anything else. A few short hairs are set here and there, but they are scarce observable. The color of the manati is

that of lead, with a few mottlings of a pinkish-white hue upon the belly; but in this respect there is no uniformity. Some are seen with the whole under-parts of a uniform cream-color.

The lungs of this animal present a peculiarity worthy of being noted. They are very voluminous, — being sometimes three feet in length, and of such a porous and elastic nature as to be capable of immense extension. When blown out, they present the appearance of great swimming bladders; and it is by means of this capacity for containing air that the manati is enabled to remain so long under water, — though, like the true *cetaceæ*, it requires to come at intervals to the surface to obtain breath.

The flesh of the manati is eaten by all the tribes of Indians who can procure it, — though by some it is more highly esteemed than by others. It was once much relished in the colonial settlements of Guiana and the West Indies, and formed a considerable article of commerce; but in these quarters manatis have grown scarce, — from the incessant persecution of the fishermen. The flesh has been deemed unwholesome by some, and apt to produce fevers; but this is not the general opinion. It has a greater resemblance to pork than beef, — though it be the flesh of a cow, — and is very savory when fresh, though neither is it bad eating when salted or dried in the sun. In this way it will keep for several months; and it has always been a stock article with the monks of the South American missions, — who, in spite of its mammiferous character, find it convenient, during the days of Lent, to regard it as a *fish*! The skin of the manati is of exceeding thick-

ness, — on the back an inch and a half at least, though it becomes thinner as it approaches the under-parts of the body. It is cut into slips which serve various purposes, as for shields, cordage, and whips. "These whips of manati leather," says Humboldt, "are a cruel instrument of punishment for the unhappy slaves, and even for the Indians of the missions, though, according to the laws, the latter ought to be treated as freemen."

Another valuable commodity obtained from this animal is oil, known in the missions as manati-butter (*manteca de manati*). This is produced by the layer of pure fat, of an inch and a half in thickness, which, lying immediately under the skin, envelops the whole body of the animal. The oil is used for lamps in the mission churches; but among the Indians themselves it is also employed in the *cuisine*, — as it has not that fetid smell peculiar to the oil of whales and salt-water cetaceæ.

The food of the manati is grass exclusively, which it finds on the banks of the lakes and rivers it frequents. Of this it will eat an enormous quantity; and its usual time of browsing is at night, — though this habit may have arisen from its observance of the fact, that night is the safest time to approach the shore. In those places where is has been left undisturbed, it may be often seen browsing by day.

I have been thus particular in my account of this animal, because it is more nearly connected with the history of Ottomac habits than perhaps that of any other tribe of South American Indians, — the Guamos alone excepted, who may themselves be regarded as merely a branch of the Ottomac family. Though, as already remarked, all the tribes who dwell upon manati

rivers pursue this creature and feed upon its flesh, yet in no other part of South America is this species of fishery so extensively or so dexterously carried on as among the Ottomacs and Guamos, — the reason being, that, amidst the great grassy savannas which characterize the Ottomac country, there are numerous streams and lagoons that are the favorite haunts of this herbivorous animal. In one river in particular, so great a number are found that it has been distinguished by the appellation of the *Rio de Manatis* (river of manatis). The manati, when undisturbed, is gregarious in its habits, going in troops (or "herds," if we preserve the analogy) of greater or less numbers, and keeping the young "calves" in the centre, which the mothers guard with the tenderest affection. So attached are the parents to their young, that if the calf be taken, the mother can be easily approached; and the devotion is reciprocated on the filial side; since in cases where the mother has been captured and dragged ashore, the young one has often been known to follow the lifeless body up to the very bank!

As the manati plays such an important part in the domestic economy of the Ottomacs, of course the capturing of this animal is carried on upon the grandest scale among these people, and, like the "harvest of turtle-eggs," hereafter to be described, the manati fishery has its particular *season*. Some writers have erroneously stated this season as being the period of inundation, and when the water is at its maximum height. This is quite contrary to the truth; since that period, both on the Amazon and Orinoco rivers, is just the time when all kinds of fishing is difficult and precarious

Then is the true winter, — the "blue months" of the South American river Indians; and it is then, as will presently be seen, that the Ottomac comes nearest the point of starvation, — which he approaches every year of his life.

There are manati and other kinds of fish taken at all times of the year; but the true season of the manati-fishing is when the waters of the great flood have considerably subsided, and are still continuing to diminish rapidly. When the inundation is at its height, the manati passes out of the channel current of the great river, and in search of grass it finds its way into the lakes and surrounding marshes, remaining there to browse along their banks. When the flood is rapidly passing away from it, it begins to find itself a "little out of its element," and just then is the time when it is most easily captured.

Sometimes the Indians assemble in a body with their canoes, forming a large fleet; and, proceeding to the best haunts of the "cow-fish," carry on the fishery in a wholesale manner. The monks of the missions also head the *tame* tribes on these expeditions, — as they do when collecting the eggs of the turtle, — and a regular systematic course is carried on under the eye of discipline and authority. A camp is formed at some convenient place on the shore. Scaffolds are erected for sun-drying the flesh and skins; and vessels and other utensils brought upon the ground to render the fat into oil. The manatis that have been captured are all brought in the canoes to this central point, and delivered up to be "*flensed*," cured, and cooked. There is the usual assemblage of small traders from Angostura and other

ports on the lower Orinoco, who come to barter their Indian trinkets for the *manteca de manati* in the same manner as it will presently be seen they trade for the *manteca de tortugas.* I need not add that this is a season of joy and festivity, like the wine-gatherings and harvest-homes of the European peasantry.

The mode of capturing the manati is very similar to that employed by the Esquimaux in taking the seal, and which has been elsewhere described. There is not much danger in the fishery, for no creature could be more harmless and inoffensive than this. It makes not the slightest attempt either at defence or retaliation, — though the accident sometimes occurs of a canoe being swamped or drawn under water, — but this is nothing to the Ottomac Indian, who is almost as amphibious as the manati itself.

At the proper hour the fisherman starts off in search of the manati. His fishing-boat is a canoe hollowed from a single trunk, of that kind usually styled a "dug-out." On perceiving the cow-fish resting upon the surface of the water, the Ottomac paddles towards it, observing the greatest caution; for although the organs of sight and hearing in this animal are, externally, but very little developed, it both hears and sees well; and the slightest suspicious noise would be a signal for it to dive under, and of course escape.

When near enough to insure a good aim, the Ottomac hurls his harpoon into the animal's body; which, after piercing the thick hide, sticks fast. To this harpoon a cord is attached, with a float, and the float remaining above water indicates the direction in which the wounded animal now endeavors to get off When it is tired of

struggling, the Indian regains the cord; and taking it in, hand over hand, draws up his canoe to the side of the fish. If it be still too lively, he repeatedly strikes it with a spear; but he does not aim to kill it outright until he has got it "aboard." Once there, he ends the creature's existence by driving a wooden plug into its nostrils, which in a moment deprives it of life.

The Ottomac now prepares himself to transport the carcass to his home; or, if fishing in company, to the common rendezvous. Perhaps he has some distance to take it, and against a current; and he finds it inconvenient to tow such a heavy and cumbrous article. To remedy this inconvenience, he adopts the expedient already mentioned, of placing the carcass in his canoe. But how does he get it there? How can a single Indian of ordinary strength raise a weight of a thousand pounds out of the water, and lift it over the gunwale of his unsteady craft? It is in this that he exhibits great cunning and address: for instead of raising the carcass above the canoe, he sinks the canoe below the carcass, by first filling the vessel nearly full of water; and then, after he has got his freight aboard, he bales out the water with his gourd-shell. He at length succeeds in adjusting his load, and then paddles homeward with his prize.

On arriving at his village, — if it be to the village he takes it, — he is assisted in transporting the load by others of his tribe; but he does not carry it to his own house, — for the Ottomacs are true socialists, and the produce both of the chase and the fishery is the common property of all. The chief of the village, seated in front of his hut, receives all that is brought home, and dis-

tributes it out to the various heads of families, — giving to each in proportion to the number of mouths that are to be fed.

The manati is flayed, — its thick hide, as already observed, serving for many useful purposes; the strata of fat, or "blubber," which lies beneath is removed, to be converted into oil; and finally, the flesh, which is esteemed equal to pork, both in delicacy and flavor, is cut into thin slices, either to be broiled and eaten at the time, or to be preserved for a future occasion, not by salt, of which the Ottomac is entirely ignorant, but by drying in the sun and smoking over a slow fire. Fish and the flesh of the alligator are similarly "cured;" and when the process is carefully done, both will keep for months.

The alligator is captured in various ways: sometimes by a baited hook with a strong cord attached, — sometimes he is killed by a stab of the harpoon-spear, and not unfrequently is he taken by a noose slipped over his paw, the Ottomac diving fearlessly under him and adjusting the snare.

Some of the Indian tribes will not eat the musky flesh of the alligator; but the Ottomacs are not thus particular. Indeed, these people refuse scarce any article of food, however nasty or disagreeable; and it is a saying among their neighbors — the Indians of other tribes — that "nothing is too loathsome for the stomach of an Ottomac."

Perhaps the saying will be considered as perfectly true when we come to describe a species of food which these people eat, and which, for a long time, has rendered them famous — or rather infamous — under the appellation of "dirt eaters." Of them it may literally

be said that they "eat dirt," for such, in reality, is one of their customs.

This singular practice is chiefly resorted to during those months in the year when the rivers swell to their greatest height, and continue full. At this time all fishing ceases, and the Ottomac finds it difficult to obtain a sufficiency of food. To make up for the deficiency, he fills his stomach with a kind of unctuous clay, which he has already stored up for the emergency, and of which he eats about a pound per diem! It does not constitute his sole diet, but often for several days together it is the only food which passes his lips! There is nothing nourishing in it, — that has been proved by analysis. It merely *fills* the belly, — producing a satiety, or, at least, giving some sort of relief from the pangs of hunger. Nor has it been observed that the Ottomac grows thin or unhealthy on this unnatural viand: on the contrary, he is one of the most robust and healthy of American Indians.

The earth which the Ottomac eats goes by the name of *poya*. He does not eat clay of every kind: only a peculiar sort which he finds upon the banks of streams. It is soft and smooth to the touch, and unctuous, like putty. In its natural state it is of a yellowish-gray color; but, when hardened before the fire, it assumes a tinge of red, owing to the oxide of iron which is in it.

It was for a long time believed that the Ottomac mixed this clay with cassava and turtle-oil, or some other sort of nutritive substance. Even Father Gumilla — who was credulous enough to believe almost anything — could not "swallow" the story of the clay in its natural state, but believed that it was prepared with

some combination of farinha or fat. This, however, is not the case. It is a pure earth, containing (according to the analysis of Vauquelin) silex and alumina, with three or four per cent of lime!

This clay the Ottomac stores up, forming it into balls of several inches in diameter; which, being slightly hardened before the fire, he builds into little pyramids, just as cannon-balls are piled in an arsenal or fortress. When the Ottomac wishes to eat of the *poya*, he softens one of the balls by wetting it; and then, scraping off as much as he may require for his meal, returns the *poya* to its place on the pyramid.

The dirt-eating does not entirely end with the falling of the waters. The practice has begot a craving for it; and the Ottomac is not contented without a little *poya*, even when more nutritious food may be obtained in abundance.

This habit of eating earth is not exclusively Ottomac. Other kindred tribes indulge in it, though not to so great an extent; and we find the same unnatural practice among the savages of New Caledonia and the Indian archipelago. It is also common on the west coast of Africa. Humboldt believed it to be exclusively a tropical habit. In this the great philosopher was in error, since it is known to be practised by some tribes of northern Indians on the frigid banks of the Mackenzie River.

When the floods subside, as already stated, the Ottomac lives better. Then he can obtain both fish and turtles in abundance. The former he captures, both with hooks and nets, or shoots with his arrows when they rise near the surface.

The turtles of the Ottomac rivers are of two kinds

the *arau* and *terecay*. The former is the one most sought after, as being by far the largest. It is nearly a yard across the back, and weighs from fifty to a hundred pounds. It is a shy creature, and would be difficult to capture, were it not for a habit it has of raising its head above the surface of the water, and thus exposing the soft part of its throat to the Indian's arrow. Even then an arrow might fail to kill it; but the Ottomac takes care to have the point well coated with *curare* poison, which in a few seconds does its work, and secures the death of the victim.

The *terecay* is taken in a different and still more ingenious manner. This species, floating along the surface, or even when lying still, presents no mark at which a shaft can be aimed with the slightest chance of success. The sharpest arrow would glance off its flat shelly back as from a surface of steel. In order, therefore, to reach the vitals of his victim, the Indian adopts an expedient, in which he exhibits a dexterity and skill that are truly remarkable.

He aims his shaft, not at the turtle, but up into the air, describing by its course a parabolic curve, and so calculating its velocity and direction that it will drop perpendicularly, point foremost, upon the back of the unsuspecting swimmer, and pierce through the shell right into the vital veins of its body!

It is rare that an Indian will fail in hitting such a mark; and, both on the Orinoco and Amazon, thousands of turtles are obtained in this manner.

The great season of Ottomac festivity and rejoicing, however, is that of the *cosecha de tortugas*, or "turtle-crop." As has been already observed, in relation to the

manati fishery, it is to him what the harvest-home is to the nations of northern Europe, or the wine-gathering to those of the south; for this is more truly the character of the *cosecha*. It is then that he is enabled, not only to procure a supply of turtle-oil with which to lubricate his hair and skin, but he obtains enough of this delicious grease wherewith to fry his dried slices of manati, and a surplus for sale to the turtle-traders from the Lower Orinoco. In this petty commerce no coin is required; harpoon-spears, and arrow-heads of iron, rude knives, and hachets; but, above all, a few cakes of *annotto chica*, and *caruto*, are bartered in exchange for the turtle-oil. The thick hide of the manati, — for making slave-whips, — the spotted skin of the jaguar, and some other pelts which the chase produces, are also items of his export trade.

The pigments above mentioned have already been procured by the trader, as the *export* articles of commerce of some other tribe.

The turtle-oil is the product of the eggs of the larger species, — the *arau*, — known simply by the name *tortuga*, or turtle. The eggs of the *terecay* would serve equally as well; but, from a difference in the habit of this animal, its eggs cannot be obtained in sufficient quantity for oil-making. There is no such thing as a grand "cosecha," or crop of them — for the creature is not gregarious, like its congener, but each female makes her nest apart from the others, in some solitary place, and there brings forth her young brood. Not but that the nests of the *terecay* are also found and despoiled of their eggs, — but this only occurs at intervals; and as the contents of a single nest would not be sufficient for

a "churning," no "butter" can be made of them. They are, therefore, gathered to be used only as *eggs*, and not as *butter*.

The *arau*, on the other hand, although not gregarious under ordinary circumstances, becomes pre-eminently so during the "laying season." Then all the turtles in the Orinoco and its tributaries collect into three or four vast gangs — numbering in all over a million of individuals — and proceed to certain points of rendezvous which they have been in the habit of visiting from time immemorial. These common breeding-places are situated between the cataracts of the river and the great bend, where it meets the Apure; and are simply broad beaches of sand, rising with a gentle slope from the edge of the water, and extending for miles along the bank. There are some small rookeries on tributary streams, but the three most noted are upon the shores of the main river, between the points already indicated. That frequented by the Ottomacs is upon an island, at the mouth of the Uruana River, upon which these people principally dwell.

The laying season of the *arau* turtle varies in the different rivers of tropical America, — occurring in the Amazon and its tributaries at a different period from that of the Orinoco. It is regulated by the rise, or rather the fall of the inundations; and takes place when the waters, at their lowest stage, have laid bare the low sand-banks upon the shores. This occurs (in the Orinoco) in March, and early in this month the great assemblages are complete. For weeks before, the turtles are seen, in all parts of the river near the intended breeding-places, swimming about on the sur-

face, or basking along the banks. As the sun grows stronger, the desire of depositing their eggs increases, — as though the heat had something to do with their fecundation. For some time before the final action, the creatures may be seen ranged in a long line in front of the breeding-place, with their heads and necks held high above the water; as if contemplating their intended nursery, and calculating the dangers to which they may be exposed. It is not without reason that they may dwell upon these. Along the beach stalks the lordly jaguar, waiting to make a meal of the first that may set his foot on terra firma, or to fill his stomach with the delicious "new-laid" eggs. The ugly alligator, too, is equally *friand* of a gigantic omelette; and not less so the "garzas" (white cranes), and the "zamuros" (black vultures), who hover in hundreds in the air. Here and there, too, may be observed an Indian sentinel, keeping as much as possible out of sight of the turtles themselves, but endeavoring to drive off all other enemies whose presence may give them fear. Should a canoe or boat appear upon the river, it is warned by these sentinels to keep well off from the phalanx of the turtles, — lest these should be disturbed or alarmed, — for the Indian well knows that if anything should occur to produce a panic among the araus, his *cosecha* would be very much shortened thereby.

When at length the turtles have had sun enough to warm them to the work, they crawl out upon the dry sand-beach, and the laying commences. It is at night that the operation is carried on: for then their numerous enemies — especially the vultures — are less active. Each turtle scoops out a hole, of nearly a yard in diame-

ter and depth; and having therein deposited from fifty to one hundred eggs, it covers them up with the sand, smoothing the surface, and treading it firmly down Sometimes the individuals are so crowded as to lay in one another's nests, breaking many of the eggs, and causing an inextricable confusion; while the creaking noise of their shells rubbing against each other may be heard afar off, like the rushing of a cataract. Sometimes a number that have arrived late, or have been slow at their work, continue engaged in it till after daybreak, and even after the Indians have come upon the ground — whose presence they no longer regard. Impelled by the instinct of philoprogenitiveness, these "mad turtles," as the Indians call them, appear utterly regardless of danger, and make no effort to escape from it; but are turned over on their backs, or killed upon the spot without difficulty.

The beach being now deserted by the turtles, the egg-gatherers proceed to their work. As there are usually several tribes, who claim a share in the *cosecha*, the ground is measured out, and partitioned among them. The regularity with which the nests are placed, and the number of eggs in each being pretty nearly the same, an average estimate of the quantity under a given surface is easily made. By means of a pointed stick thrust into the sand, the outline of the deposit is ascertained — usually running along the beach in a strip of about thirty yards in breadth.

When the allotments are determined, the work of oil-making begins, — each tribe working by itself, and upon the social system. The covering of sand is removed, and the eggs placed in baskets, which are then

emptied into large wooden troughs, as a common receptacle. The canoes, drawn up on the sand, are frequently made to do duty as troughs. When a sufficient number of eggs have been thrown in, they are broken and pounded together, and whipped about, as if intended for a gigantic omelette. Water is added; and then the mixture is put into large caldrons, and boiled until the oil comes to the top; after which it is carefully skimmed off and poured into earthern jars ("botigas,") provided by the traders.

It takes about two weeks to complete the operations, during which time many curious scenes occur. The sand swarms with young turtles about as big as a dollar, which have been prematurely hatched; and have contrived to crawl out of the shell. These are chased in all directions, and captured by the little naked Ottomacs, who devour them "body, bones, and all," with as much gusto as if they were gooseberries. The cranes and vultures, and young alligators too, take a part in this by-play — for the offspring of the poor arau has no end of enemies.

When the oil is all boiled and bottled, the trader displays his tempting wares, and makes the best market he can; and the savage returns to his palm-hut village, — taking with him the articles of exchange and a few baskets of eggs, which he has reserved for his own eating; and so ends the *cosecha de tortugas*.

It is in this season that the Ottomac indulges most in good living, and eats the smallest quantity of dirt. The waters afford him abundance of fish and turtle-flesh, beef from the sea-cow, and steaks from the tail of the alligator. He has his turtle and manati butter, in which

to fry all these daities, and also to lubricate his hair and skin.

He can dress, too, "within an inch of his life," having obtained for his oil a fresh supply of the precious pigments. He indulges, moreover, in fits of intoxication, caused by a beverage made from maize or manioc root; but oftener produced by a species of snuff which he inhales into his nostrils. This is the *niopo*, manufactured from the leaves of a *mimosa*, and mixed with a kind of lime, which last is obtained by burning a shell of the genus *helix*, that is found in the waters of the Orinoco. The effect of the *niopo* resembles that produced by chewing *betel*, tobacco, opium, or the narcotic *coca* of Peru. When freely taken, a species of intoxication or rather mania is produced; but this snuff and its effects are more minutely described elsewhere. It is here introduced because, in the case of the Ottomac, the drug often produces most baneful consequences. During the continuance of his intoxication the Ottomac is quarrelsome and disorderly. He picks a hole in the coat of his neighbor; but if there chance to be any "old sore" between him and a rival, the vindictive feeling is sure to exhibit itself on these occasions; and not unfrequently ends in an encounter, causing the death of one or both of the combatants. These duels are not fought either with swords or pistols, knives, clubs, nor any similar weapons. The destruction of the victim is brought about in a very different manner; and is the result of a very slight scratch which he has received during the fight from the *nail* of his antagonist. That a wound of so trifling a nature should prove mortal would be something very mysterious, did we not know that the nail which

inflicted that scratch has been already enfiltrated with *curare*, — one of the deadliest of vegetable poisons, which the Ottomac understands how to prepare in its most potent and virulent form.

Should it ever be your unfortunate fate therefore, to get into a "scrimmage" with an Ottomac Indian, you must remember to keep clear of his "claws"!

THE COMANCHES, OR PRAIRIE INDIANS.

Young reader, I need scarce tell you that the noblest of animals — the horse — is not indigenous to America. You already know that when Columbus discovered the New World, no animal of the horse kind was found there; and yet the geologist has proved incontestably that at one time horses existed in the New World, — at a period too, geologically speaking, not very remote. The fossilized bones examined by one of the most accomplished of modern travellers — Dr. Darwin — establish this truth beyond a doubt.

The horse that at present inhabits America, though not indigenous, has proved a flourishing exotic. Not only in a domestic state has he increased in numbers, but he has in many places escaped from the control of man, and now runs wild upon the great plains both of North and South America. Although you may find in America almost every "breed" of horses known in Europe, yet the great majority belong to two very distinct kinds. The first of these is the large English horse, in his different varieties, imported by the Anglo-Americans, and existing almost exclusively in the woodland territory of the United States. The second kind is the Andalu-

sian-Arab, — the horse of the Spanish conquerors, — a much smaller breed than the English-Arabian, but quite equal to him in mettle and beauty of form. It is the Andalusian horse that is found throughout all Spanish America, — it is he that has multiplied to such a wonderful extent, — it is he that has "run wild."

That the horse in his normal state is a dweller upon open plains, is proved by his habits in America, — for in no part where the forest predominates is he found wild, — only upon the prairies of the north, and the llanos and pampas of the south, where a timbered tract forms the exception.

He must have found these great steppes congenial to his natural disposition, — since, only a very short time after the arrival of the Spaniards in the New World, we find the horse a runaway from civilization, — not only existing in a wild state upon the prairies, but in possession of many of the Indian tribes.

It would be an interesting inquiry to trace the change of habits which the possession of the horse must have occasioned among these Arabs of the Western world. However hostile they may have been to his European rider, they must have welcomed the horse as a friend. No doubt they admired the bold, free spirit of the noble animal so analogous to their own nature. He and they soon became inseparable companions; and have continued so from that time to the present hour. Certain it is that the prairie, or "horse-Indians" of the present day, are in many respects essentially different from the staid and stoical sons of the forest so often depicted in romances; and almost equally certain is it, that the possession of the horse has contributed much to bring about

this dissimilarity. It could not be otherwise. With the horse new habits were introduced, — new manners and customs, — new modes of thought and action. Not only the chase, but war itself, became a changed game, — to be played in an entirely different manner.

We shall not go back to inquire what these Indians *were* when afoot. It is our purpose only to describe what they *are* now that they are on horseback. Literally, may we say *on horseback;* for, unless at this present writing they are asleep, we may safely take it for granted they are upon the backs of their horses, — young and old of them, rich and poor, — for there is none of them so poor as not to be the master of a "mustang" steed.

In "Prairie-land" every tribe of Indians is in possession of the horse. On the north the Crees, Crows, and Blackfeet, the Sioux, Cheyennes, and Arapahoes; on the plains of the Platte, the Kansas, and Osage, we find the Pawnees, the Kansas, and Osages, — all horse-Indians. West of the great mountain-range, the Apache is mounted: so likewise the Utah, the Navajo, and the Snake, or Shoshonee, — the latter rather sparingly. Other tribes, to a greater or less degree, possess this valuable animal; but the true type of the "horse-Indian" is to be found in the Comanche, the lord of that wide domain that extends from the Arkansas to the Rio Grande. He it is who gives trouble to the frontier colonists of Texas, and equally harasses the Spanish settlements of New Mexico; he it is who carries his forays almost into the heart of New Spain, — even to the gates of the populous Durango.

Regarding the Comanche, then, as the type of the

horse-Indians, we shall speak more particularly of him. Allowing for some slight difference in the character of his climate and country, his habits and customs will be found not very dissimilar to those of the other tribes who make the prairie their home.

To say that the Comanche is the finest horseman in the world would be to state what is not the fact. He is not more excellent in this accomplishment than his neighbor and bitter foeman, the Pawnee, — no better than the "vaquero" of California, the "ranchero" of Mexico, the "llanero" of Venezuela, the "gaucho" of Buenos Ayres, and the horse-Indians of the "Gran Chaco" of Paraguay, of the Pampas, and Patagonia. He is *equal*, however, to any of these, and that is saying enough, — in a word, that he takes rank among the finest horsemen in the world.

The Comanche is on horseback almost from the hour of infancy, — transferred, as it were, from his mother's arms to the withers of a mustang. When able to walk, he is scarce allowed to practise this natural mode of progression, but performs all his movements on the back of a horse. A Comanche would no more think of making a journey afoot — even if it were only to the distance of a few hundred yards — than he would of crawling upon his hands and knees. The horse, ready saddled and bridled, stands ever near, — it differs little whether there is either saddle or bridle, — and flinging himself on the animal's back, or his neck, or his croup, or hanging suspended along his side, the Indian guides him to the destined spot, usually at a rapid gallop. It is of no consequence to the rider how fast the horse may be going: it will not hinder him from mounting or

dismounting at will. At any time, by clutching the mane, he can spring upon the horse's shoulders, — just as may be often seen in the arena of the circus.

The horse-Indian is a true type of the *nomadic* races, — a dweller in tents, which his four-footed associate enables him to transport from place to place with the utmost facility. Some of the tribes, however, and even some of the Comanches, have fixed residences, or "villages," where at a certain season of the year they — or rather their women — cultivate the maize, the pumpkin, the melon, the calabash, and a few other species of plants, — all being vegetable products indigenous to their country. No doubt, before the arrival of Europeans, this cultivation was carried on more extensively than at present; but the possession of the horse has enabled the prairie tribes to dispense with a calling which they cordially contemn: the calling of the husbandman.

These misguided savages, one and all, regard agricultural pursuits as unworthy of men; and wherever necessity compels them to practise them, the work falls to the lot of the women and slaves, — for be it known that the Comanche is a slave-owner; and holds in bondage not only Indians of other tribes, but also a large number of mestizoes and whites of the Spanish race, captured during many a sanguinary raid into the settlements of Mexico! It would be easy to show that it is this false pride of being hunters and warriors, with its associated aversion for an agricultural life, that has thinned the numbers of the Indian race — far more than any persecution they have endured at the hands of the white man. This it is that starves them, that makes unendurable neighbors of them, and has rendered

it necessary in some instances to "civilize them off the face of the earth."

But they are not yet all civilized from off the face of the earth; nor is it their destiny to disappear so readily as short-seeing prophets have declared. Their idle habits and internecine wars have done much to thin their numbers, — far more than the white man's hostility, — but wherever the white man has stepped in and put a stop to their tribal contentions, — wherever he has succeeded in conquering their aversion to industrial pursuits, — the Indian is found not only to hold his ground, but to increase rapidly in numbers. This is the case with many tribes, — Creeks, Choctaws, and Cherokees, — so that I can promise you, young reader, that by the time you get to be an old man, there will be as many Indians in the world as upon that day when Columbus first set his foot upon "Cat" Island.

You will be inquiring how the horse could render the prairie Indian more independent of agriculture? The answer is simple. With this valuable auxiliary a new mode of subsistence was placed within his reach. An article of food, which he had hitherto been able to obtain only in a limited quantity, was now procurable in abundance, — the flesh of the buffalo.

The prairies of North America have their own peculiarities. They are not stocked with large droves of ruminant animals, as the plains of Southern Africa, — where the simplest savage may easily obtain a dinner of flesh-meat. A few species of deer, thinly distributed, — all swift, shy animals, — the prong-horn antelope, still swifter and shier, — and the "big-horn," shiest of all, — were the only ruminants of Prairie-land, with the ex-

ception of the great bison, or buffalo, as he is generally called. But even this last was not so easily captured in those days. The bison, though not a swift runner, is yet more than a match for the biped man; and though the Indian might steal upon the great drove, and succeed in bringing down a few with his arrows, it was not always a sure game. Moreover, afoot, the hunter could not follow the buffalo in its grand migrations, — often extending for hundreds of miles across plains, rivers, and ravines. Once mounted, the circumstances became changed. The Indian hunter could not only overtake the buffalo, but ride round him at will, and pursue him, if need be, to the most distant parts of Prairie-land. The result, therefore, of the introduction of the horse was a plentiful supply of buffalo-meat, or, when that failed, the flesh of the horse himself, — upon which two articles of diet the prairie Indian has almost exclusively subsisted ever since.

The Comanche has several modes of hunting the buffalo. If alone, and he wishes to make a grand *coup*, he will leave his horse at a distance, — the animal being trained to remain where his master has left him. The hunter then approaches the herd with great caution, keeping to leeward, — lest he might be "winded" by the old sentinel bulls who keep watch. Should there be no cover to shelter the approach of the hunter, the result would be that the bulls would discover him; and, giving out their bellow of alarm, cause the others to scamper off.

To guard against this, the Indian has already prepared himself by adopting a *ruse*, — which consists in disguising himself in the skin of a buffalo, horns and

all complete, and approaching the herd, as if he were some stray individual that had been left behind, and was just on the way to join its fellows. Even the motions of the buffalo, when browsing, are closely imitated by the red hunter; and, unless the wind be in favor of his being scented by the bulls, this device will insure the success of a shot. Sometimes the skin of the large whitish-gray wolf is used in this masquerade with equal success. This may appear singular, since the animal itself is one of the deadliest enemies of the buffalo: a large pack of them hanging on the skirts of every herd, and patiently waiting for an opportunity to attack it. But as this attack is only directed against the younger calves, — or some disabled or decrepit individual who may lag behind, — the strong and healthy ones have no fear of the wolves, and permit them to squat upon the prairie within a few feet of where they are browsing! Indeed, they could not hinder them, even if they wished: as the long-legged wolf in a few springs can easily get out of the way of the more clumsy ruminant; and, therefore, does not dread the lowering frontlet of the most shaggy and ill-tempered bull in the herd.

Of course the hunter, in the guise of a wolf, obtains the like privilege of close quarters; and, when he has arrived at the proper distance for his purpose, he prepares himself for the work of destruction. The bow is the weapon he uses, — though the rifle is now a common weapon in the hands of many of the horse-Indians. But the bow is preferred for the species of "still hunting" here described. The first crack of a rifle would scatter the gang, leaving the hunter perhaps only an empty gun for his pains; while an arrow at such close

quarters is equally as deadly in its effect; and, being a *silent* weapon, no alarm is given to any of the buffaloes except that one which has felt the deadly shaft passing through its vitals.

Often the animal thus shot — even when the wound is a mortal one — does not immediately fall; but sinks gradually to the earth, as if lying down for a rest. Sometimes it gets only to its knees, and dies in this attitude; at other times it remains a long while upon its legs, spreading its feet widely apart, as if to prop itself up, and then rocking from side to side like a ship in a ground-swell, till at last, weakened by loss of blood, it yields its body to the earth. Sometimes the struggles of a wounded individual cause the herd to "stampede," and then the hunter has to content himself with what he may already have shot; but not unfrequently the unsuspicious gang keeps the ground till the Indian has emptied his quiver. Nay, longer than that: for it often occurs that the disguised buffalo or wolf (as the case may be) approaches the bodies of those that have fallen, recovers some of his arrows, and uses them a second time with like deadly effect! For this purpose it is his practice, if the aim and distance favor him, to send his shaft clear through the body of the bison, in order that the barb may not hinder it from being extracted on the other side! This feat is by no means of uncommon occurrence among the buffalo-hunters of the prairies.

Of course, a grand wholesale slaughter of the kind just described is not an every-day matter; and can only be accomplished when the buffaloes are in a state of comparative rest, or browsing slowly. More generally they detect the dangerous counterfeit in time to save

their skins; or else keep moving too rapidly for the hunter to follow them on foot. His only resource, then, is to ride rapidly up on horseback, fire his arrows without dismounting, or strike the victim with his long lance while galloping side by side with it. If in this way he can obtain two or three fat cows, before his horse becomes *blown*, or the herd scatters beyond his reach, he considers that he has had good success.

But in this kind of chase the hunter is rarely alone: the whole tribe takes part in it; and, mounted on their well-trained mustangs, often pursue the buffalo gangs for an hour or more, before the latter can get off and hide themselves in the distance, or behind the swells of the prairie. The clouds of dust raised in a *mêlée* of this kind often afford the buffalo a chance of escaping, — especially when they are running *with* the wind.

A "buffalo surround" is effected by a large party of hunters riding to a great distance; deploying themselves into a circle around the herd; and then galloping inward with loud yells. The buffaloes, thus attacked on all sides, become frightened and confused, and are easily driven into a close-packed mass, around the edges of which the mounted hunters wheel and deliver their arrows, or strike those that try to escape, with their long spears. Sometimes the infuriated bulls rush upon the horses, and gore them to death; and the hunters, thus dismounted, often run a narrow risk of meeting with the same fate, — more than a risk, for not unfrequently they are killed outright. Often are they obliged to leap up on the croup of a companion's horse, to get out of the way of danger; and many instances are recorded where a horseman, by the stumbling of his horse, has

been pitched right into the thick of the herd, and has made his escape by mounting on the backs of the bulls themselves, and leaping from one to another until he has reached clear ground again.

The buffalo is never captured in a "pound," as large mammalia are in many countries. He is too powerful a creature to be imprisoned by anything but the strongest stockade fence; and for this the prairie country does not afford materials. A contrivance, however, of a somewhat similar character is occasionally resorted to by various tribes of Indians. When it is known that the buffaloes have become habituated to range in any part of the country, where the plain is intersected by deep ravines, — *cañons*, or *barrancas*, as they are called, — then a grand *battue* is got up by driving the animals pellmell over the precipitous bluffs, which universally form the sides of these singular ravines. To guide the herd to the point where it is intended they should take the fatal leap, a singular contrivance is resorted to. This consists in placing two rows of objects — which appear to the buffalo to be human beings — in such a manner that one end of each row abuts upon the edge of the precipice, not very distant from the other, while the lines extend far out into the plain, until they have diverged into a wide and extensive funnel. It is simply the contrivance used for guiding animals into a pound; but, instead of a pair of close log fences, the objects forming these rows stand at a considerable distance apart; and, as already stated, appear to the not very discriminating eye of the buffalo to be human beings. They are in reality designed to resemble the human form in a rude fashion and the material out of which they are constructed is

neither more nor less than the dung of the buffaloes themselves, — the *bois de vache*, as it is called by the Canadian trappers, who often warm their shins, and roast their buffalo ribs over a fire of this same material.

The decoy being thus set, the mounted hunters next make a wide sweep around the prairie, — including in their deployment such gangs of buffaloes as may be browsing between their line and the mouth of the funnel. At first the buffaloes are merely guided forward, or driven slowly and with caution, — as boys in snow-time often drive larks toward their snares. When the animals, however, have entered between the converging lines of mock men, a rush, accompanied by hideous yells, is made upon them from behind: the result of which is, that they are impelled forward in a headlong course towards the precipice.

The buffalo is, at best, but a half-blind creature. Through the long, shaggy locks hanging over his frontlet he sees objects in a dubious light, or not at all. He depends more on his scent than his sight; but though he may scent a living enemy, the keenness of his organ does not warn him of the yawning chasm that opens before him, — not till it is too late to retire: for although he may perceive the fearful leap before taking it, and would willingly turn on his track, and refuse it, he finds it no longer possible to do so. In fact, he is not allowed time for reflection. The dense crowd presses from behind, and he is left no choice, except that of springing forward or suffering himself to be tumbled over upon his head. In either case it is his last leap; and, frequently, the last of a whole crowd of his companions.

With such persecutions, I need hardly say that the buffaloes are becoming scarcer every year; and it is predicted that at no distant period this really valuable mammal will be altogether extinct. At present their range is greatly contracted within the wide boundaries which it formerly occupied. Going west from the Mississippi, — at any point below the mouth of the Missouri, — you will not meet with buffalo for the first three hundred miles; and, though the herds formerly ranged to the south and west of the Rio Grande, the Comanches on the banks of that river no longer know the buffalo, except by their excursions to the grand prairie far to the north of their country. The Great Slave Lake is the northern terminus of the buffalo range; and westward the chain of the Rocky Mountains; but of late years stray herds have been observed at some points west of these, — impelled through the passes by the hunter-pressure of the horse-Indians from the eastward. Speculators have adopted several ingenious and plausible reasons to account for the diminution of the numbers of the buffalo. There is but one cause worth assigning, — a very simple one too, — the horse.

With the disappearance of the buffalo, — or perhaps with the thinning of their numbers, — the prairie Indians may be induced to throw aside their roving habits. This would be a happy result both for them and their neighbors; though it is even doubtful whether it might follow from such a circumstance. No doubt some change would be effected in their mode of life; but unfortunately these Bedouins of the Western world can live upon the horse, even if the buffalo were entirely extirpated. Even as it is, whole tribes of them subsist almost

exclusively upon horse-flesh, which they esteem and relish more than any other food. But this resource would, in time, also fail them; for they have not the economy to raise a sufficient supply for the demand that would occur were the buffaloes once out of the way: since the *caballadas* of wild mustangs are by no means so easy to capture as the "gangs" of unwieldy and lumbering buffaloes.

It is to be hoped, however, that before the horse-Indians have been put to this trial, the strong arm of civilization shall be extended over them, and, withholding them from those predatory incursions, which they annually make into the Mexican settlements, will induce them to *dismount*, and turn peaceably to the tillage of the soil, — now so successfully practised by numerous tribes of their race, who dwell in fixed and flourishing homes upon the eastern border of the prairies.

At this moment, however, the Comanches are in open hostility with the settlers of the Texan frontier. The *lex talionis* is in active operation while we write, and every mail brings the account of some sanguinary massacre, or some act of terrible retaliation. The deeds of blood and savage cruelty practised alike by both sides — whites as well as Indians — have had their parallel, it is true, but they are not the less revolting to read about. The colonists have suffered much from these Ishmaelites of the West, — these lordly savages, who regard industry as a dishonorable calling; and who fancy that their vast territory should remain an idle hunting-ground, or rather a fortress, to which they might betake themselves during their intervals of war and plundering. The colonists have a clear title to the land, — that title

acknowledged by all right-thinking men, who believe the good of the majority must not be sacrificed to the obstinacy of the individual, or the minority, — that title which gives the right to remove the dwelling of the citizen, — his very castle, — rather than that the public way be impeded. All admit this right; and just such a title has the Texan colonist to the soil of the Comanche. There may be guilt in the *mode* of establishing the claim, — there may have been scenes of cruelty, and blood unnecessarily spilt, — but it is some consolation to know that there has occurred nothing yet to parallel in cold-blooded atrocity the annals of Algiers, or the similar acts committed in Southern Africa. The crime of *smoke-murder* is yet peculiar to Pellisier and Potgieter.

In their present outbreak, the Comanches have exhibited but a poor, short-sighted policy. They will find they have committed a grand error in mistaking the courageous colonists of Texas for the weak Mexicans, — with whom they have long been at war, and whom they have almost invariably conquered. The result is easily told: much blood may be shed on both sides, but it is sure to end as all such contests do; and the Comanche, like the Caffre, must "go to the wall." Perhaps it is better that things should be brought to a climax, — it will certainly be better for the wretched remnant of the Spano-Americans dwelling along the Comanche frontiers, — a race who for a hundred years have not known peace.

As this long-standing hostility with the Mexican nation has been a predominant feature in the history of the Comanche Indian, it is necessary to give some ac-

count of how it is usually carried on. There was a time when the Spanish nation entertained the hope of *Christianizing* these rude savages, — that is, taming and training them to something of the condition to which they have brought the Aztec descendants of Montezuma, — a condition scarce differing from slavery itself. As no gold or silver mines had been discovered in Texas, it was not their intention to make mine-laborers of them; but rather *peons*, or field-laborers, and tenders of cattle, — precisely as they had done, and were still doing, with the tribes of California. The soldier and the sword had proved a failure, — as in many other parts of Spanish America, — in fact, everywhere, except among the degenerated remnants of monarchical misrule found in Mexico, Bogota, and Peru. In these countries was encountered the *débris* of a declining civilization, and not, as is generally believed, the children of a progressive development; and of course they gave way, — as the people of all corrupted monarchies must in the end.

It was different with the "Indios bravos," or warrior tribes, still free and independent, — the so-called *savages*. Against these the soldier and the sword proved a complete failure; and it therefore became necessary to use the other kind of conquering power, — the monk and his cross. Among the Comanches this kind of conquest had attained a certain amount of success. Mission-houses sprung up through the whole province of Texas, — the Comanche country, — though the new neophytes were not altogether Comanches, but rather Indians of other tribes who were less warlike. Many Comanches, however, became converts; and some of the "missiones" became establishments on a grand scale, — each having

according to Spanish missionary-fashion, its "presidio," or garrison of troops, to keep the new believers within sound of the bell, and to hunt and bring them back whenever they endeavored to escape from that Christian vassalage for which they had too rashly exchanged their pagan freedom.

All went well, so long as Spain was a power upon the earth, and the Mexican viceroyalty was rich enough to keep the presidios stocked with troopers. The monks led as jolly a life as their prototypes of "Bolton Abbey in the olden time." The neophytes were simply their slaves, receiving, in exchange for the sweat of their brow, baptism, absolution, little pewter crucifixes, and various like valuable commodities.

But there came a time when they grew tired of the exchange, and longed for their old life of roving freedom. Their brethren had obtained the horse; and this was an additional attraction which a prairie life presented. They grew tired of the petty tricks of the Christian superstition, — to their view less rational than their own, — they grew tired of the toil of constant work, the childlike chastisements inflicted, and sick of the sound of that ever-clanging clapper, — the bell. In fine, they made one desperate effort, and freed themselves forever.

The grand establishment of San Saba, on the river of the same name, fell first. The troops were abroad on some convert-hunting expedition. The Comanches entered the fort, — their tomahawks and war-clubs hidden under their great robes of buffalo-hide: the attack commenced, and ended only with the annihilation of the settlement.

One monk alone escaped the slaughter, — a man renowned for his holy zeal. He fled towards San Antonio, pursued by a savage band. A large river coursed across the route it was necessary for him to take; but this did not intercept him: its waters opened for a moment, till the bottom was bare from bank to bank. He crossed without wetting his feet. The waves closed immediately behind him, offering an impassable barrier to his pursuers, who could only vent their fury in idle curses But the monk could curse too. He had, perhaps, taken some lessons at the Vatican; and, turning round, he anathematized every "mother's son" of the red-skinned savages. The wholesale excommunication produced a wonderful effect. Every one of the accursed fell back where he stood, and lay face upward upon the plain, dead as a post! The monk, after baptizing the river "Brazos de Dios" (arm of God), continued his flight, and reached San Antonio in safety, — where he duly detailed his miraculous adventure to the credulous converts of Bejar, and the other missions.

Such is the supposed origin of the name Brazos de Dios, which the second river in Texas bears to this day. It is to be remarked, however, that the river crossed by the monk was the present Colorado, not the Brazos: for, by a curious error of the colonists, the two rivers have made an exchange of titles!

The Comanches — freed from missionary rule, and now equal to their adversaries by possession of the horse — forthwith commenced their plundering expeditions; and, with short intervals of truce, — periods *en paz*, — have continued them to the present hour. All Northern and Western Texas they soon recovered; but

they were not content with territory: they wanted horses and cattle and chattels, and white wives and slaves; and it would scarce be credited, were I to state the number of these they have taken within the last half-century. Nearly every year they have been in the habit of making an expedition to the Mexican settlements of the provinces Tamanlipas, New Leon, and Chihuahua, — every expedition a fresh conquest over their feeble and corrupt adversaries. On every occasion they have returned with booty, consisting of horses, cattle, sheep, household utensils, and, sad to relate, human captives. Women and children only do they bring back, — the men they kill upon sight. The children may be either male or female, — it matters not which, as these are to be adopted into their tribe, to become future warriors; and, strange to relate, many of these, when grown up, not only refuse to return to the land of their birth, but prove the most bitter and dangerous foes to the people from whom they have sprung! Even the girls and women, after a period become reconciled to their new home, and no longer desire to leave it. Some, when afterwards discovered and ransomed by their kindred, have refused to accept the conditions, but prefer to continue the savage career into which misfortune has introduced them! Many a heart-rending scene has been the consequence of such apparently unnatural predilections.

You would wonder why such a state of things has been so long submitted to by a civilized people; but it is not so much to be wondered at. The selfishness that springs from constant revolutions has destroyed almost every sentiment of patriotism in the Mexican national heart; and, indeed, many of these captives are perhaps

not much worse off under the guardianship of the brave Comanches than they would have been, exposed to the petty tyranny and robber-rule that has so long existed in Mexico. Besides, it is doubtful whether the Mexican government, with all her united strength, could retake them. The Comanche country is as inaccessible to a regular army as the territory of Timbuctoo; and it will give even the powerful republic of the north no small trouble to reduce these red freebooters to subjection. Mexico had quite despaired of being able to make an effort; and in the last treaty made between her and the United States, one of the articles was a special agreement on the part of the latter to restrain the Comanches from future forays into the Mexican states, and also cause them to deliver up the Mexican captives then in the hands of the Indians!

It was computed that their number at the time amounted to four thousand! It is with regret I have to add, that these unfortunates are still held in bondage. The great republic, too busy with its own concerns, has not carried out the stipulations of the treaty; and the present Comanche war is but the result of this criminal negligence. Had energetic measures been adopted at the close of the Mexico-American war, the Comanche would not now be harrying the settlers of Texas.

To prove the incapacity of the Mexicans to deal with this warlike race, it only needs to consider the present condition of the northern Mexican states. One half the territory in that extensive region has returned to the condition of a desert. The isolated "ranchos" have been long since abandoned, — the fields are overgrown with weeds, — and the cattle have run wild, or been

carried off by the Comanches. Only the stronger settlements and large fortified haciendas any longer exist; and many of these, too, have been deserted. Where children once played in the security of innocence, — where gayly-dressed cavaliers and elegant ladies amused themselves in the pleasant *dia de campo*, such scenes are no longer witnessed. The rancho is in ruins, — the door hangs upon its hinge, broken and battered, or has been torn off to feed the camp-fire of the savage; the dwelling is empty and silent, except when the howling wolf or coyote wakes up the echoes of its walls.

About ten years ago, the proud governor of the state of Chihuahua — one of the most energetic soldiers of the Mexican republic — had a son taken captive by the Comanches. Powerful though this man was, he knew it was idle to appeal to arms; and was only too contented to recover his child by paying a large ransom! This fact, more than a volume of words, will illustrate the condition of unhappy Mexico.

The Comanche leads a gay, merry life, — he is far from being the Indian of Cooper's description. In scarcely any respect does he resemble the sombre son of the forest. He is lively, talkative, and ever ready for a laugh. His butt is the Mexican presidio soldier, whom he holds in too just contempt. He is rarely without a meal. If the buffalo fails him, he can draw a steak from his spare horses, of which he possesses a large herd: besides, there are the wild mustangs, which he can capture on occasions. He has no work to do except war and hunting: at all other times he has slaves to wait upon him, and perform the domestic drudgery. When idle, he sometimes bestows great pains upon his

dress, — which is the usual deer-skin tunic of the prairie Indian, with moccasons and fringed leggings. Sometimes a head-dress of plumes is worn; sometimes one of the skin of the buffalo's skull, with the horns left on! The robe of buffalo pelt hangs from his shoulders, with all the grandeur of a toga; but when he proceeds on a plundering expedition, all these fripperies are thrown aside, and his body appears naked from the waist to the ears. Then only the breech-clout is worn, with leggings and moccasons on his legs and feet. A coat of scarlet paint takes the place of the hunting-shirt, — in order to render his presence more terrific in the eyes of his enemy. It needs not this. Without any disguise, the sight of him is sufficiently horrifying, — sufficiently suggestive of "blood and murder."

THE PEHUENCHES, OR PAMPAS INDIANS.

The vast plain known as the "Pampas" is one of the largest tracts of level country upon the face of the earth. East and west it stretches from the mouth of the Rio de la Plata to the foot-hills of the Andes mountains. It is interrupted on the north by a series of mountains and hill country, that cross from the Andes to the Paraguay River, forming the Sierras of Mendoza, San Luis, and Cordova; while its southern boundary is not so definitely marked, though it may be regarded as ending at the Rio Negro, where it meets, coming up from the south, the desert plains of Patagonia.

Geologically, the Pampas (or plains, as the word signifies, in the language of the Peruvian Indians) is an alluvial formation, — the bed of an ancient sea upheaved by some unknown cause to its present elevation, which is not much above the ocean-level. It is not, therefore, a *plateau* or "table-land," but a vast natural meadow. The soil is in general of a red color, argillaceous in character, and at all points filled with marine shells and other testimonies that the sea once rolled over it. It is in the Pampas formation that many of the fossil monsters have been found, — the gigantic *megatherium*, the colossal *my-*

todon, and the giant armadillo (*glyptodon*), with many other creatures, of such dimensions as to make it a subject of speculation how the earth could have produced food enough for their maintenance.

In giving to the Pampas the designation of a ***vast meadow***, do not suffer yourself to be misled by this phrase, — which is here and elsewhere used in rather a loose and indefinite manner. Many large tracts in the Pampas country would correspond well enough to this definition, — both as regards their appearance and the character of the herbage which covers them; but there are other parts which bear not the slightest resemblance to a meadow. There are vast tracts thickly covered with tall thistles, — so tall as to reach to the head of a man mounted on horseback, and so thickly set, that neither man nor horse could enter them without a path being first cleared for them.

Other extensive tracts are grown over with tall grass so rank as to resemble reeds or rushes more than grass; and an equally extensive surface is timbered with small trees, standing thinly and without underwood, like the fruit-trees in an orchard. Again, there are wide morasses and extensive lakes, many of them brackish, and some as salt as the sea itself. In addition to these, there are "salinas," or plains of salt, — the produce of salt lakes, whose waters have evaporated, leaving a stratum of pure salt often over a foot in thickness, and covering their beds to an extent of many square leagues. There are some parts, too, where the Pampas country assumes a sterile and stony character, — corresponding to that of the great desert of Patagonia. It is not correct, therefore, to regard the Pampas as one unbroken

tract of *meadow*. In one character alone is it uniform in being a country without mountains, — or any considerable elevations in the way of ridges or hills, — though a few scattered sierras are found both on its northern and southern edges.

The *Thistle Pampas*, as we take the liberty of naming them, constitute perhaps the most curious section of this great plain; and not the less so that the "weed" which covers them is supposed not to be an indigenous production, but to have been carried there by the early colonists. About this, however, there is a difference of opinion. No matter whence sprung, the thistles have flourished luxuriantly, and at this day constitute a marked feature in the scenery of the Pampas. Their position is upon the eastern edge of the great plain, contiguous to the banks of the La Plata; but from this river they extend backwards into the interior, at some points to the distance of nearly two hundred miles. Over this vast surface they grow so thickly that, as already mentioned, it is not possible for either man or horse to make way through them. They can only be traversed by devious paths — already formed by constant use, and leading through narrow lanes or glades, where, for some reason, the thistles do not choose to grow. Otherwise they cannot be entered even by cattle. These will not, unless compelled, attempt penetrating such an impervious thicket; and if a herd driven along the paths should chance to be "stampeded" by any object of terror, and driven to take to the thistles, scarce a head of the whole flock can ever afterwards be recovered. Even the instincts of the dumb animals do not enable them to find their way out again; and they usually perish, either

from thirst, or by the claws of the fierce pumas and jaguars, which alone find themselves at home in the labyrinthine "*cardonales.*" The little *viscacha* contrives to make its burrow among them, and must find subsistence by feeding upon their leaves and seed, since there is no other herbage upon the ground, — the well-armed thistle usurping the soil, and hindering the growth of any other plants. It may be proper to remark, however, that there are two kinds of these plants, both of which cover large tracts of the plain. One is a true thistle, while the other is a weed of the artichoke family, called by the Spanish Americans "cardoon." It is a species of *Cardunculus.* The two do not mingle their stalks, though both form thickets in a similar manner and often in the same tract of country. The cardoon is not so tall as the thistle; and, being without spines, its "beds" are more easily penetrated; though even among these, it would be easy enough to get entangled and lost.

It is proper to remark here, that these thistle-thickets do not shut up the country all the year round. Only for a season, — from the time they have grown up and "shoot," till their tall ripened stalks wither and fall back to the earth, where they soon moulder into decay. The plains are then open and free to all creatures, — man among the rest, — and the Gaucho, with his herds of horses, horned cattle, and sheep, or the troops of roving Indians, spread over and take possession of them.

The young thistles now present the appearance of a vast field of turnips; and their leaves, still tender, are greedily devoured by both cattle and sheep. In this condition the Pampas thistles remain during their short

winter; but as spring returns, they once more "bristle" up, till, growing taller and stouter, they present a *chevaux-de-frise* that at length expels all intruders from their domain.

On the western selvage of this thistle tract lies the grass-covered section of the Pampas. It is much more extensive than that of the "cardonales," — having an average width of three hundred miles, and running longitudinally throughout the whole northern and southern extension of the Pampas. Its chief characteristic is a covering of coarse grass, — which at different seasons of the year is short or tall, green, brown, or yellowish, according to the different degrees of ripeness. When dry, it is sometimes fired, — either by design or accident, — as are also the withered stems of the thistles; and on these occasions a conflagration occurs, stupendous in its effects, — often extending over vast tracts, and reducing everything to black ashes. Nothing can be more melancholy to the eye than the aspect of a burnt pampa.

The grass section is succeeded by that of the "openings," or scanty forests, already mentioned; but the trees in many places are more closely set; assuming the character of thickets, or "jungles." These tracts end among the spurs of the Andes, — which, at some points, are thrown out into the plain, but generally rise up from it abruptly and by a well-defined border.

The marshes and bitter lakes above mentioned are the produce of numerous streams, which have their rise in the Great Cordillera of the Andes, and run eastward across the Pampas. A few of these, that trend in a southerly direction, reach the Atlantic by means of the

two great outlets, — the "Colorado" and "Negro." All the others — and "their name is legion" — empty their waters into the morasses and lakes, or sink into the soil of the plains, at a greater or less distance from the Cordillera, according to the body of water they may carry down. Evaporation keeps up the equilibrium.

Who are the dwellers upon the Pampas? To whom does this vast pasture-ground belong? Whose flocks and herds are they that browse upon it?

You will be told that the Pampas belong to the republic of Buenos Ayres, or rather to the "States of the Argentine Confederation," — that they are inhabited by a class of citizens called "Gauchos," who are of Spanish race, and whose sole occupation is that of herdsmen, breeders of cattle and horses, — men famed for their skill as horsemen, and for their dexterity in the use of the "lazo" and "bolas," — two weapons borrowed from the aboriginal races.

All this is but partially true. The proprietorship of this great plain was never actually in the hands of the Buenos-Ayrean government, nor in those of their predecessors, — the Spaniards. Neither has ever owned it — either by conquest or otherwise — no further than by an empty boast of ownership; for, from the day when they first set foot upon its borders to the present hour, neither has ever been able to cross it, or penetrate any great distance into it, without a grand army to back their progress. But their possession virtually ceased at the termination of each melancholy excursion; and the land relapsed to its original owners. With the exception of some scanty strips along its borders, and some wider ranges, thinly occupied by the half-nomade Gauchos, the

Pampas are in reality an Indian territory, as they have always been; and the claim of the white man is no more than nominal, — a mere title upon the map. It is not the only vast expanse of Spanish American soil that *never was Spanish.*

The true owners of the Pampas, then, are the red aborigines, — the Pampas Indians; and to give some account of these is now our purpose.

Forming so large an extent, it is not likely it should all belong to one united tribe, — that would at once elevate them into the character of a nation. But they are not united. On the contrary, they form several distinct associations, with an endless number of smaller subdivisions or communities, — just in the same way as it is among their prairie cousins of the north. They may all, however, be referred to four grand tribal associations or nationalities, — the *Pehuenches*, *Puelches*, *Picunches*, and *Ranqueles.*

Some add the *Puilliches*, who dwell on the southern rim of the Pampas; but these, although they extend their excursions over a portion of the great plain, are different from the other Pampas Indians in many respects, — altogether a braver and better race of men, and partaking more of the character of the Patagonians, — both in point of *physique* and *morale*, — of which tribes, indeed, they are evidently only a branch. In their dealings with white men, when fairly treated, these have exhibited the same noble bearing which characterizes the true Patagonian. I shall not, therefore, lower the standard — neither of their bodies nor their minds — by classing them among "Pampas Indians."

Of these tribes — one and all of them — we have,

unfortunately, a much less favorable impression; and shall therefore be able to say but little to their credit.

The different names are all native. *Puelches* means the people living to the east, from "*puel*," east, and *che*, people. The *Picunches* derive this appellation, in a similar fashion, from "*picun*," signifying the north. The *Pehuenches* are the people of the pine-tree country, from "*pehuen*," the name for the celebrated "Chili pine" (*Araucaria*); and the *Ranqueles* are the men who dwell among the thistles, from *ranquel*, a thistle.

These national appellations will give some idea of the locality which each tribe inhabits. The *Ranqueles* dwell, not among the thistles, — for that would be an unpleasant residence, even to a red-skin; but along the western border of this tract. To the westward of them, and up into the clefts of the Cordilleras extends the country of the Pehuenches; and northward of both lies the land of the Picunches. Their boundary in that direction *should be* the frontiers of the *quasi-civilized* provinces of San Luis and Cordova, but they are *not;* for the Picunche can at will extend his plundering forays as far north as he pleases: even to *dovetailing* them into the similar excursions of his *Guaycuru* kinsmen from the "Gran Chaco" on the north.

The Puelche territory is on the eastern side of the Pampas, and south from Buenos Ayres. At one time these people occupied the country to the banks of the La Plata; and no doubt it was they who first met the Spaniards in hostile array. Even up to a late period their forays extended almost to Buenos Ayres itself; but Rosas, tyrant as he may have been, was nevertheless a true soldier, and in a grand military expedition against

them swept their country, and inflicted such a terrible chastisement upon both them and the neighboring tribes, as they had not suffered since the days of Mendoza. The result has been a retirement of the Puelche frontier to a much greater distance from Buenos Ayres; but how long it may continue stationary is a question, — no longer than some strong arm — such as that of Rosas — is held threateningly over them.

It is usual to inquire whence come a people; and the question has been asked of the Pampas Indians. It is not difficult to answer. They came from the land of Arauco. Yes, they are the kindred of that famed people whom the Spaniards could never subdue, — even with all their strength put forth in the effort. They are near kindred too, — the Pehuenches especially, — whose country is only separated from that of the Araucanians by the great Cordillera of Chili; and with whom, as well as the Spaniards on the Chilian side, they have constant and friendly intercourse.

But it must be admitted, that the Araucanians have had far more than their just meed of praise. The romantic stories, in that endless epic of the rhymer Ercilla, have crept into history; and the credulous Molina has endorsed them: so that the true character of the Araucanian Indian has never been understood. Brave he has shown himself, beyond doubt, in defending his country against Spanish aggression; but so, too, has the Carib and Guaraon, — so, too, has the Comanche and Apache, the Yaqui of Sonora, the savage of the Mosquito shore, the Guaycuru of the Gran Chaco, and a score of other Indian tribes, — in whose territory the Spaniard has never dared to fix a settlement. Brave is the Arau-

canian; but, beyond this, he has few virtues indeed. He is cruel in the extreme, — uncivil and selfish, — filthy and indolent, — a polygamist in the most approved fashion, — a very tyrant over his own, — in short, taking rank among the beastliest of semi-civilized savages, — for it may be here observed, that he is not exactly what is termed a *savage:* that is, he does not go naked, and sleep in the open air. On the contrary, he clothes himself in stuff of his own weaving, — or rather, that of his slave-wives, — and lives in a hut which they build for him. He owns land, too, — beautiful fields, — of which he makes no use: except to browse a few horses, and sheep, and cattle. For the rest, he is too indolent to pursue agriculture; and spends most of his time in drinking *chicha*, or tyrannizing over his wives. This is the heroic Araucanian who inhabits the plains and valleys of Southern Chili.

Unfortunately, by passing to the other side of the Andes, he has not improved his manners. The air of the Pampas does not appear to be conducive to virtue; and upon that side of the mountains it can scarce be said to exist, — even in the shape of personal courage. The men of the pines and thistles seem to have lost this quality, while passing through the snows of the Cordilleras, or left it behind them, as they have also left the incipient civilization of their race. On the Pampas we find them once more in the character of the true savage: living by the chase or by plunder; and bartering the produce of the latter for the trappings and trinkets of personal adornment, supplied them by the unprincipled white trader. Puelches and Picunches, Pehuenches and Ranqueles, all share this character alike, — all are treacherous, quarrelsome, and cowardly.

But we shall now speak more particularly of their customs and modes of life, and we may take the "pine people" as our text, — since these are supposed to be most nearly related to the true Araucanians, — and, indeed, many of their "ways" are exactly the same as those of that "heroic nation."

The "people of the pines" are of the ordinary stature of North-American Indians, or of Europeans; and their natural color is a dark coppery hue. But it is not often you can see them in their natural color: for the Pampas Indians, like nearly all the aboriginal tribes, are "painters." They have pigments of black and white, blue, red, and yellow, — all of which they obtain from different colored stones, found in the streams of the Cordilleras. "Yama," they call the black stone; "colo," the red; "palan," the white; and "codin," the blue; the yellow they obtain from a sort of argillaceous earth. The stones of each color they submit to a rubbing or grinding process, until a quantity of dust is produced; which, being mixed with suet, constitutes the paint, ready for being laid on.

The Pampas Indians do not confine themselves to any particular "escutcheon." In this respect their fancy is allowed a wide scope, and their fashions change. A face quite black, or red, is a common countenance among them; and often may be seen a single band, of about two inches in width, extending from ear to ear across the eyes and nose. On war excursions they paint hideous figures: not only on their own faces and bodies, but on their trappings, and even upon the bodies of their horses, — aiming to render themselves as appalling as possible in the sight of their enemies. The same trick

is employed by the warriors of the prairies, as well as in many other parts of the world. Under ordinary circumstances, the Pampas Indian is not a *naked* savage. On the contrary, he is well clad; and, so far from obtaining the material of his garments from the looms of civilized nations, he weaves it for himself, — that is, his wives weave it; and in such quantity that he has not only enough for his own "wear," but more than enough, a surplus for trade. The cloth is usually a stuff spun and woven from sheep's wool. It is coarse, but durable; and in the shape of blankets or "ponchos," is eagerly purchased by the Spanish traders. Silver spurs, long, pointed knives, lance-heads, and a few other iron commodities, constitute the articles of exchange, with various ornamental articles, as beads, rings, bracelets, and large-headed silver bodkins to fasten their cloaks around the shoulders of his "ladies." Nor is he contented with mere tinsel, as other savages are, — he can tell the difference between the real metal and the counterfeit, as well as the most expert assayer; and if he should fancy to have a pair of silver spurs, not even a Jew pedler could put off upon him the plated "article." In this respect the Araucanian Indian has been distinguished, since his earliest intercourse with Europeans; and his Pampas kindred are equally subtle in their appreciation.

The Pampas Indian, when well dressed, has a cloak upon his shoulders of the thick woollen stuff already described. It is usually woven in colors; and is not unlike the "poncho" worn by the "gauchos" of Buenos Ayres, or the "serape" of the Mexicans. Besides the cloak, his dress consists of a mere skirt, — also of colored

woollen stuff, being an oblong piece swathed around his loins, and reaching to the knee. A sash or belt — sometimes elaborately ornamented — binds the cloth around the waist. Boots of a peculiar construction complete the costume. These are manufactured in a very simple manner. The fresh skin taken from a horse's hind leg is drawn on — just as if it were a stocking — until the heel rests in that part which covered the hock-joint of the original wearer. The superfluous portion is then trimmed to accommodate itself as a covering for the foot; and the boot is not only finished, but put on, — there to remain until it is worn out, and a new one required! If it should be a little loose at first, that does not matter. The hot sun, combined with the warmth of the wearer's leg, soon contracts the hide, and brings it to "fit like a glove." The head is often left uncovered; but as often a sort of skull-cap or helmet of horse-skin is worn; and not unfrequently a high, conical hat of palm-fibre. This last is not a native production, but an importation of the traders. So also is a pair of enormous rings of brass, which are worn in the ears; and are as bulky as a pair of padlocks. In this costume, mounted on horseback with his long lance in hand, the Pampas Indian would be a picturesque object; and really is so, when *clean;* but that is only on the very rarest occasions, — only when he has donned a new suit. At all other times, not only his face and the skin of his body, but every rag upon his back, are covered with grease and filth, — so as to produce an effect rather "tatterdemalion" than picturesque.

The "squaw" is costumed somewhat differently First she has a long "robe," which covers her from

neck to heels, leaving only her neck and arms bare. The robe is of red or blue woollen stuff of her own weaving. This garment is the "quedeto." A belt, embroidered with beads, called "quepique," holds it around the waist, by means of a large silver buckle. This belt is an article of first fashion. Over the shoulders hangs the "iquilla," which is a square piece of similar stuff, — but usually of a different dye; and which is fastened in front by a pin with a large silver head, called the "tupo." The shock of thick, black hair — after having received the usual anointment of mare's tallow, the fashionable hair-oil of the Pampas Indians — is kept in its place by a sort of cap or *coiffure*, like a shallow dish inverted, and bristling all over with trader's beads. To this a little bell is fastened; or sometimes a brace of them are worn as ear-rings. These tinkle so agreeably in the ears of the wearer, that she can scarce for a moment hold her head at rest, but keeps rocking it from side to side, as a Spanish coquette would play with her fan.

In addition to this varied wardrobe, the Pampas belle carries a large stock of bijouterie, — such as beads and bangles upon her neck, rings and circlets upon her arms, ankles, and fingers; and, to set her snaky locks in order, she separates them by means of a stiff brush, made from the fibrous roots of a reed. *She* is *picturesque* enough, but never *pretty*. Nature has given the Araucanian woman a plain face; and all the adornment in the world cannot hide its homeliness.

The Pehuenche builds no house. He is a true nomade, and dwells in a tent, though one of the rudest construction. As it differs entirely from the tent of

the prairie Indians, it may be worth while describing it.

Its framework is of reeds, — of the same kind as are used for the long lances so often mentioned; and which resemble *bambusa* canes. They grow in plenty throughout the Pampas, especially near the mountains, — where they form impenetrable thickets on the borders of the marshy lakes. Any other flexible poles will serve as well, when the canes are not "handy."

The poles being procured, one is first bent into a semicircle, and in this shape both ends are stuck into the ground, so as to form an arch about three feet in height. This arch afterwards becomes the doorway or entrance to the tent. The remaining poles are attached to this first one at one end, and at right angles; and being carried backward with a slight bend, their other ends are inserted into the turf. This forms the skeleton of the tent; and its covering is a horse-skin, or rather a number of horse-skins stitched together, making a sort of large tarpaulin. The skins are sewed with the sinews of the horse or ox, — which are first chewed by the women, until their fibres become separated like hemp, and are afterwards spun by them into twine.

The tent is not tall enough to admit of a man standing erect; and in it the Pehuenche crouches, whenever it snows, rains, or blows cold. He has sheep-skins spread to sleep upon, and other skins to serve as bed-clothes, — all in so filthy a condition, that but for the cold, he might find it far more comfortable to sleep in the open air. He never attempts to sweep out this miserable lair; but when the spot becomes *very* filthy, he "takes up his sticks" and shifts his *penates* to a fresh "location." He

is generally, however, too indolent to make a "remove," — until the dirt has accumulated so as to "be in the way."

The Pampas Indian is less of a hunter than most other tribes of savages. He has less need to be, — at least, in modern days; for he is in possession of three kinds of valuable domestic animals, upon which he can subsist without hunting, — horses, horned cattle, and sheep. Of course, these are of colonial origin. He hunts, nevertheless, for amusement, and to vary his food. The larger ostrich (*rhea Americana*), the guanaco, and the great "gama" stag of the Pampas (*cervus campestris*) are his usual game. These he captures with the *bolas*, — which is his chief implement for the chase. In the flesh of the stag he may find a variety, but not a delicacy. Its venison would scarce tempt a Lucullian palate, — since even the hungriest Gaucho will not eat it. It is a large beast, often weighing above three hundred pounds; and infecting the air with such a rank odor, that dogs decline to follow it in the chase. This odor is generated in a pair of glands situated near the eyes; and it has the power of projecting it at will, — just as skunks and polecats when closely chased by an enemy. If these glands are cut out immediately after the animal is killed, the flesh tastes well enough: otherwise it is too rank to be eatable. The Indians cure it of the "bad smell" by burying it for several days in the ground; which has the effect of "sweetening" it, while at the same time it makes it more tender.

But the Pampas Indian does not rely upon the chase for his subsistence. He is a small grazier in his way and is usually accompanied in his wanderings by a herd

of horned cattle and sheep. He has also his stud of horses; which furnish the *staple* of his food, — for whenever he hungers, a horse is "slaughtered." Strictly speaking, it is not a horse, for it is the mare that is used for this purpose. In no part of the Pampas region, — not even in the white settlement, — are the mares used for riding. It would be considered derogatory to the character of either Gaucho or Indian to mount a mare; and these are kept only for breeding purposes. Not that the Indian is much of a horse-breeder. He keeps up his stock in quite another way, — by stealing. The same remark will apply to the mode by which he recruits his herds of horned cattle, and his flocks of sheep. The last he values only for their wool; out of which his garments are woven; and which has replaced the scantier fleece of the vicuña and guanaco, — the material used by him in days gone by.

From whom does he steal these valuable animals, — and in such numbers as almost to subsist upon them? That is a question that can be easily answered; though it is not exact language to say that he steals them. Rather say that he *takes* them, by main force and in open daylight, — takes them from the Creole Spaniard, — the Gaucho and *estanciero*. Nay, he does not content himself always with four-footed plunder; but often returns from his forays with a crowd of captives, — women and children, with white skins and ruddy cheeks, — afterwards to be converted into his drudges and slaves. Not alone to the frontier does he extend these plundering expeditions; but even into the heart of the Spanish settlements, — to the estancias of grandees, and the gates of fortified towns; and, strange as it may read, this con-

dition of things has been in existence, not for years, but, at intervals, extending over a century!

But what may read stranger still — and I can vouch for it as true — is, that *white men* actually purchase this plunder from him, — not the human part of it, but the four-footed and the *furniture*, — for this, too, sometimes forms part of his booty. Yes, the surplus, of which the Indian can make no use or cares nothing about, — more especially the large droves of fine horses, taken from the Spaniards of Buenos Ayres, — are driven through the passes of the Cordilleras, and sold to the Spaniards of Chili! the people of one province actually encouraging the robbery of their kindred race in another! The very same condition of things exists in North America. The Comanche steals, or rather takes, from the white settler of Tamaulipas and New Leon, — the Apache rieves from the white settler of Chihuahua and Sonora: both sell to the white settlers, who dwell along the banks of the Rio del Norte! And all these settlers are of one race, — one country, — one kindred! These things have hitherto been styled *cosas de Mexico*. Their signification may be extended to South America: since they are equally *cosas de las Pampas*.

We are not permitted to doubt the truth of these appalling facts, — neither as regards the nefarious traffic, nor the captive women and children. At this very hour, not less than four thousand individuals of Spanish-Mexican race are held captives by the prairie tribes; and when Rosas swept the Pampas, he released fifteen hundred of similar unfortunates from their worse than Egyptian taskmasters, — the Puelches!

With such facts as these before our eyes, who can

doubt the decline of the Spanish power? the utter enfeeblement of that once noble race? Who can contradict the hypothetical prophecy — more than once offered in these pages — that if the two races be left to themselves, the aboriginal, before the lapse of a single century, will once more recover the soil; and his haughty victor be swept from the face of the American continent?

Nor need such a change be too keenly regretted. The Spanish occupation of America has been an utter failure. It has served no high human purpose, but the contrary. It has only corrupted and encowardiced a once brave and noble race; and, savage as may be the character of that which would supplant it, still that savage has within him the elements of a future civilization.

Not so the Spaniard. The fire of his civilization has blazed up with a high but fitful gleam. It has passed like the lightning's flash. Its sparks have fallen and died out, — never to be rekindled again.

THE YAMPARICOS, OR ROOT-DIGGERS.

It is now pretty generally known that there are many deserts in North America, — as wild, waste, and inhospitable as the famed Sahara of Africa. These deserts occupy a large portion of the central regions of that great continent — extending, north and south, from Mexico to the shores of the Arctic Sea; and east and west for several hundred miles, on each side of the great vertebral chain of the Rocky Mountains. It is true that in the vast territory thus indicated, the desert is not continuous; but it is equally true that the fertile stripes or valleys that intersect it, bear but a very small proportion to the whole surface. Many tracts are there, of larger area than all the British Islands, where the desert is scarce varied by an oasis, and where the very rivers pursue their course amidst rocks and barren sands, without a blade of vegetation on their banks. Usually, however, a narrow selvage of green — caused by the growth of cottonwoods, willows, and a few humbler plants — denotes the course of a stream, — a glad sight at all times to the weary and thirsting traveller.

These desert wastes are not all alike, but differ much in character. In one point only do they agree, — they

are all *deserts.* Otherwise they exhibit many varieties, — both of aspect and nature. Some of them are level plains, with scarce a hill to break the monotony of the view: and of this character is the greater portion of the desert country extending eastward from the Rocky Mountains to about 100° of west longitude. At this point the soil gradually becomes more fertile, — assuming the character of timbered tracts, with prairie opening between, — at length terminating in the vast, unbroken forests of the Mississippi.

This eastern desert extends parallel with the Rocky Mountains, — throughout nearly the whole of their length, — from the Rio Grande in Mexico, northward to the Mackenzie River. One tract of it deserves particular mention. It is that known as the *Llano estacado*, or "staked plain," It lies in Northwestern Texas, and consists of a barren plateau, of several thousand square miles in extent, the surface of which is raised nearly a thousand feet above the level of the surrounding plains. Geologists have endeavored to account for this singular formation, but in vain. The table-like elevation of the Llano estacado still remains a puzzle. Its name, however, is easier of explanation. In the days of Spanish supremacy over this part of Prairie-land, caravans frequently journeyed from Santa Fé in New Mexico, to San Antonio in Texas. The most direct route between these two provincial capitals lay across the Llano estacado; but as there were neither mountains nor other landmarks to guide the traveller, he often wandered from the right path, — a mistake that frequently ended in the most terrible suffering from thirst, and very often in the loss of life. To prevent such catastrophes, *stakes*

were set up at such intervals as to be seen from one another, like so many "telegraph posts;" and although these have long since disappeared, the great plain still bears the name, given to it from this circumstance.

Besides the contour of surface, there are other respects in which the desert tracts of North America differ from one another. In their vegetation — if it deserves the name — they are unlike. Some have no vegetation whatever; but exhibit a surface of pure sand, or sand and pebbles; others are covered with a stratum of soda, of snow-white color, and still others with a layer of common salt, equally white and pure. Many of these salt and soda "prairies" — as the trappers term them — are hundreds of square miles in extent. Again, there are deserts of scoria, of lava, and pumice-stone, — the "cut-rock prairies" of the trappers, — a perfect contrast in color to the above-mentioned. All these are absolutely without vegetation of any sort.

On some of the wastes — those of southern latitudes, — the cactus appears of several species, and also the wild agave, or "pita" plant; but these plants are in reality but emblems of the desert itself. So, also, is the *yucca*, which thinly stands over many of the great plains, in the southwestern part of the desert region, — its stiff, shaggy foliage in no way relieving the sterile landscape, but rather rendering its aspect more horrid and austere.

Again, there are the deserts known as "chapparals," — extensive jungles of brush and low trees, all of a thorny character among which the "mezquite" of several species (*mimosas* and *acacias*), the "stink-wood" or creosote plant (*kœberlinia*), the "grease-bush" (*obione*

canescens), several kinds of *prosopis*, and now and then, as if to gratify the eye of the tired traveller, the tall flowering spike of the scarlet *fouquiera*. Further to the north — especially throughout the upper section of the Great Salt Lake territory — are vast tracts, upon which scarce any vegetation appears, except the *artemisia* plant, and other kindred products of a sterile soil.

Of all the desert tracts upon the North-American continent, perhaps none possesses greater interest for the student of cosmography than that known as the "Great Basin." It has been so styled from the fact of its possessing a hydrographic system of its own, — lakes and rivers that have no communication with the sea; but whose waters spend themselves within the limits of the desert itself, and are kept in equilibrium by evaporation, — as is the case with many water systems of the continents of the Old World, both in Asia and Africa.

The largest lake of the "Basin" is the "Great Salt Lake," — of late so celebrated in Mormon story: since near its southern shore the chief city of the "Latter-day Saints" is situated. But there are other large lakes within the limits of the Great Basin, both fresh and saline, — most of them entirely unconnected with the Great Salt Lake, and some of them having a complete system of waters of their own. There are "Utah" and "Humboldt," "Walker's" and "Pyramid" lakes, with a long list of others, whose names have been but recently entered upon the map, by the numerous very intelligent explorers employed by the government of the United States.

Large rivers, too, run in all directions through this

central desert, some of them falling into the Great Salt Lake, as the "Bear" river, the "Weber," the "Utah," from Utah Lake, — upon which the Mormon metropolis stands, — and which stream has been absurdly baptized by these free-living fanatics as the "Jordan!" Other rivers are the "Timpanogos," emptying into Lake Utah; the "Humboldt," that runs to the lake of that name; the "Carson" river; besides many of lesser note.

The limits assigned to the Great Basin are tolerably well defined. Its western rim is the *Sierra Nevada*, or "snowy range" of California; while the Rocky and Wahsatch mountains are its boundaries on the east. Several cross-ranges, and spurs of ranges, separate it from the system of waters that empty northward into the Columbia River of Oregon; while upon its southern edge there is a more indefinite "divide" between it and the great desert region of the western "Colorado." Strictly speaking, the desert of the Great Basin might be regarded as only a portion of that vast tract of sterile, and almost treeless soil, which stretches from the Mexican state of Sonora to the upper waters of Oregon; but the deserts of the Colorado on the south, and those of the "forks" of the Columbia on the north, are generally treated as distinct territories; and the Great Basin, with the limits already assigned, is suffered to stand by itself. As a separate country, then, we shall here consider it.

From its name, you might fancy that the Great Basin was a low-lying tract of country. This, however, is far from being the case. On the contrary, nearly all of it is of the nature of an elevated table-land, even its lakes

lying several thousand feet above the level of the sea. It is only by its "rim," of still more elevated mountain ridges, that it can lay claim to be considered as a "basin;" but, indeed, the name — given by the somewhat speculative explorer, Fremont — is not very appropriate, since later investigations show that this rim is in many places neither definite nor regular, — especially on its northern and southern sides, where the "Great Basin" may be said to be badly cracked, and even to have some pieces chipped out of its edge.

Besides the mountain chains that surround it, many others run into and intersect it in all directions. Some are spurs of the main ranges; while others form "sierras" — as the Spaniards term them — distinct in themselves. These sierras are of all shapes and of every altitude, — from the low-lying ridge scarce rising above the plain, to peaks and summits of over ten thousand feet in elevation. Their forms are as varied as their height. Some are round or dome-shaped; others shoot up little turrets or "needles;" and still others mount into the sky in shapeless masses, — as if they had been flung upon the earth, and upon one another, in some struggle of Titans, who have left them lying in chaotic confusion. A very singular mountain form is here observed, — though it is not peculiar to this region since it is found elsewhere, beyond the limits of the Great Basin, and is also common in many parts of Africa. This is the formation known among the Spaniards as *mesas*, or "table-mountains," and by this very name it is distinguished among the colonists of the Cape.

The *Llano estacado*, already mentioned is often

styled a "mesa," but its elevation is inconsiderable when compared with the *mesa* mountains that occur in the regions west of the great Rocky chain, — both in the Basin and on the deserts of the Colorado. Many of these are of great height, — rising several thousand feet above the general level; and, with their square truncated *table-like* tops, lend a peculiar character to the landscape.

The characteristic vegetation of the Great Basin is very similar to that of the other central regions of the North-American continent. Only near the banks of the rivers and some of the fresh-water lakes, is there any evidence of a fertile soil; and even in these situations the timber is usually scarce and stunted. Of course, there are tracts that are exceptional, — oases, as they are geographically styled. Of this character is the country of the Mormons on the Jordan, their settlements on the Utah and Bear Rivers, in Tuilla and Ogden valleys, and elsewhere at more remote points. There are also isolated tracts on the banks of the smaller streams and the shores of lakes not yet "located" by the colonist; and only frequented by the original dwellers of the desert, the red aborigines. In these oases are usually found cottonwood-trees, of several distinct species, — one or other of which is the characteristic vegetation on nearly every stream from the Mississippi to the mountains of California.

Willows of many species also appear; and now and then, in stunted forms, the oak, the elm, maples, and sycamores. But all these last are very rarely encountered within the limits of the desert region. On the mountains, and more frequently in the mountain ravines

pines of many species — some of which produce edible cones — grow in such numbers as to merit the name of forests, of greater or less extent. Among these, or apart from them, may be distinguished the darker foliage of the cedar (*juniperus*) of several varieties, distinct from the *juniperus virginiana* of the States.

The arid plains are generally without the semblance of vegetation. When any appears upon them, it is of the character of the "chapparal," already described; its principal growth being "tornilla," or "screw-wood," and other varieties of *mezquite;* all of them species of the extensive order of the *leguminosæ*, and belonging to the several genera of *acacias*, *mimosas*, and *robinias*. In many places *cactacæ* appear of an endless variety of forms; and some, — as the "pitahaya" (*cereus giganteus*), and the "tree" and "cochineal" cacti (*opuntias*), — of gigantesque proportions. These, however, are only developed to their full size in the regions further south, — on the deserts of the Colorado and Gila, — where also the "tree yuccas" abound, covering tracts of large extent, and presenting the appearance of forests of palms.

Perhaps the most characteristic vegetation of the Great Basin — that is, if it deserve the name of a vegetation — is the wild sage, or *artemisia*. With this plant vast plains are covered, as far as the eye can reach; not presenting a hue of green, as the grass prairies do, but a uniform aspect of grayish white, as monotonous as if the earth were without a leaf to cover it. Instead of relieving the eye of the traveller, the artemisia rather adds to the dreariness of a desert landscape, — for its presence promises food neither to man nor horse, nor

water for them to drink, but indicates the absence of both. Upon the hill-sides also is it seen, along the sloping declivities of the sierras, marbling the dark volcanic rocks with its hoary frondage.

More than one species of this wild sage occurs throughout the American desert: there are four or five kinds, differing very considerably from each other, and known to the trappers by such names as "worm wood," "grease-bush," "stink-plant," and "rabbit-bush." Some of the species attain to a considerable height, — their tops often rising above the head of the traveller on horseback, — while another kind scarce reaches the knee of the pedestrian.

In some places the plains are so thickly covered with this vegetation, that it is difficult for either man or horse to make way through them, — the gnarled and crooked branches twisting into each other and forming an impenetrable wattle. At other places, and especially where the larger species grow, the plants stand apart like apple-trees in an orchard, and bear a considerable resemblance to shrubs or small trees.

Both man and horse refuse the artemisia as food; and so, too, the less fastidious mule. Even a donkey will not eat it. There are animals, however, — both birds and beasts, as will be seen hereafter, — that relish the sage-plant; and not only eat of it, but subsist almost exclusively on its stalks, leaves, and berries.

The denizens of the Great Basin desert — I mean its human denizens — are comprehended in two great families of the aboriginal race, — the *Utahs* and *Snakes*. or *Shoshonees*. Of the white inhabitants — the Mormons and trap-settlers — we have nothing to say here. Nor yet much respecting the above-mentioned Indians, the

Utahs and Snakes. It will be enough for our purpose to make known that these two tribes are distinct from each other, — that there are many communities or sub-tribes of both, — that each claims ownership of a large tract of the central region, lying between the Rocky Mountains and the Sierra Nevada; and that their limits are not coterminal with those of the Great Basin: since the range of the Snakes extends into Oregon upon the north, while that of the Utahs runs down into the valley of the Rio del Norte upon the south. Furthermore, that both are in possession of the horse, — the Utahs owning large numbers, — that both are of roving and predatory habits, and quite as wicked and warlike as the generality of their red brethren.

They are also as well to do in the world as most Indians; but there are many degrees in their "civilization," or rather in the comforts of their life, depending upon the situation in which they may be placed. When dwelling upon a good "salmon-stream," or among the rocky mountain "parks," that abound in game, they manage to pass a portion of the year in luxuriant abundance. In other places, however, and at other times, their existence is irksome enough, — often bordering upon actual starvation.

It may be further observed, that the Utahs and Snakes usually occupy the larger and more fertile oases of the desert, — wherever a tract is found of sufficient size to subsist a community. With this observation I shall dismiss both these tribes; for it is not of them that our present sketch is intended to treat.

This is specially designed for a far *odder* people than either, — for the *Yamparicos*, or "Root-Diggers;" and

having described their country, I shall now proceed to give some account of themselves.

It may be necessary here to remark that the name "Diggers," has of late been very improperly applied, — not only by the settlers of California, but by some of the exploring officers of the United States government. Every tribe or community throughout the desert, found existing in a state of special wretchedness, has been so styled; and a learned ethnologist (!), writing in the "Examiner," newspaper, gravely explains the name, by deriving it from the gold-diggers of California! This "conceit" of the London editor is a palpable absurdity, — since the Digger Indians were so designated, long before the first gold-digger of California put spade into its soil. The name is of "trapper" origin; bestowed upon these people from the observation of one of their most common practices, — viz., the *digging for roots*, which form an essential portion of their subsistence. The term "yamparico," is from a Spanish source, and has a very similar meaning to that of "Root-digger." It is literally "Yampa-rooter," or "Yampa-root eater," the root of the "yampah" (*anethum graviolens*) being their favorite food. The true "Diggers" are not found in California west of the Sierra Nevada; though certain tribes of ill-used Indians in that quarter are called by the name. The great deserts extending between the Nevada and the Rocky Mountains are their locality; and their limits are more or less cotemporaneous with those of the Shoshonees or Snakes, and the Utahs, — of both of which tribes they are supposed to be a sort of outcast kindred. This hypothesis, however, rests only on a slight foundation: that of some resemblance in habits

and language, which are very uncertain *criteria* where two people dwell within the same boundaries, — as, for instance, the whites and blacks in Virginia. In fact, the language of the Diggers can scarce be called a language at all: being a sort of gibberish like the growling of a dog, eked out by a copious vocabulary of signs: and perhaps, here and there, by an odd word from the Shoshonee or Utah, — not unlikely, introduced by the association of the Diggers with these last-mentioned tribes.

In the western and southern division of the Great Basin, the Digger exists under the name of *Paiute*, or more properly, *Pah-Utah*, — so-called from his supposed relationship with the tribe of the Utahs. In some respects the Pah-Utahs differ from the Shoshokee, or Snake-Diggers; though in most of their characteristic habits they are very similar to each other. There might be no anomaly committed by considering them as one people; for in personal appearance and habits of life the Pah-Utah, and the "Shoshokee" — this last is the national appellation of the yampah-eater, — are as like each other as *eggs*. We shall here speak however, principally of the Shoshokees: leaving it to be understood, that their neighbors the "Paiutes" will equally answer the description.

Although the Shoshokees, as already observed, dwell within the same limits as their supposed kindred the Shoshonees, they rarely or never associate with the latter. On the contrary, they keep well out of their way, — inhabiting only those districts of country where the larger Shoshonee communities could not dwell. The very smallest oasis, or the tiniest stream, affords all the fertility that is required for the support of a Digger

family; and rarely are these people found living more than one, or at most, two or three families together. The very necessity of their circumstances precludes the possibility of a more extensive association; for on the deserts where they dwell, neither the earth nor the air, nor yet the water, affords a sufficient supply of food to support even the smallest "tribe." Not in tribes, then, but in single families, or little groups of two or three, do the Digger Indians dwell, — not in the larger and more fertile valleys, but in those small and secluded; in the midst of the sage-plains, or more frequently in the rocky defiles of the mountains that stand thickly over the "Basin."

The Shoshokee is no *nomade*, but the very reverse. A single and isolated mountain is often the abode of his group or family; and beyond this his wanderings extend not. There he is at home, knowing every nook and rat-hole in his own neighborhood; but as ignorant of the world beyond as the "sand-rats" themselves, — whose pursuit occupies the greater portion of his time.

In respect to his "settled" mode of life, the *Shoshokee* offers a striking contrast to the *Shoshonee*. Many of the latter are Indians of noble type, — warriors who have tamed the horse, and who extend their incursions, both hunting and hostile, into the very heart of the Rocky Mountains, — up their fertile valleys, and across their splendid "parks," often bringing back with them the scalps of the savage and redoubtable Black-feet.

Far different is the character of the wretched Shoshokeee, — the mere semblance of a human being, — who rarely strays out of the ravine in which he was brought forth; and who, at sight of a human face — he

it of friend or enemy — flies to his crag or cave like a hunted beast!

The Pah-Utah Diggers, however, are of a more warlike disposition; or rather a more wicked and hostile one, — hostile to whites, or even to such other Indians as may have occasion to travel through the deserts they inhabit. These people are found scattered throughout the whole southern and southwestern portion of the Great Basin, — and also in the northwestern part of the Colorado desert, — especially about the Sevier River, and on several of the tributaries of the great Colorado itself of the west. It was through this part of the country that the caravans from California to New Mexico used to make their annual "trips," — long before Alta California became a possession of the United States, — and the route by which they travelled is known as the *Spanish trail*. The object of these caravans was the import of horses, mules, and other animals, — from the fertile valleys of the San Joaquin and Sacramento rivers, to the more sterile settlements of New Mexico. Several kinds of goods were also carried into these interior countries.

This Spanish trail was far from running in a direct line. The sandy, waterless plain — known more particularly as the Colorado desert — could not be crossed with safety, and the caravan-route was forced far to the north; and entered within the limits of the Great Basin — thus bringing it through the county inhabited by the Pah-Utah Diggers. The consequence was, that these savages looked out annually for its arrival; and, whenever an opportunity offered, stole the animals that accompanied it, or murdered any of the men who might be found straggling from the main body. When bent on

such purposes, these Diggers for a time threw aside their solitary habits, — assembling in large bands of several hundred each, and following the caravan travellers, like wolves upon the track of a gang of buffaloes. They never made their attacks upon the main body, or when the white men were in any considerable force. Only small groups who had lagged behind, or gone too rashly in advance, had to fear from these merciless marauders, — who never thought of such a thing as making captives, but murdered indiscriminately all who fell into their hands. When horses or mules were captured, it was never done with the intention of keeping them to ride upon. Scarcely ever do the Pah-Utahs make such a use of the horse. Only for food were these stolen or plundered from their owners; and when a booty of this kind was obtained, the animals were driven to some remote defile among the mountains, and there slaughtered outright. So long as a morsel of horse or mule flesh remained upon the bones, the Diggers kept up a scene of feasting and merriment — precisely similar to the *carnivals* of the African Bushmen, after a successful foray upon the cattle of the Dutch settlers near the Cape. Indeed there is such a very striking resemblance between the Bushmen of Africa and these Digger Indians of North America; that, were it not for the distinction of race, and some slight differences in personal appearance, they might pass as one people. In nearly every habit and custom, the two people resemble each other; and in many mental characteristics they appear truly identical.

The Pah-Utah Diggers have not yet laid aside their hostile and predatory habits. They are at the present

hour engaged in plundering forays, — acting towards the emigrant trains of Californian adventurers just as they did towards the Spanish caravans. But they usually meet with a very different reception from the more daring Saxon travellers, who constitute the "trains" now crossing their country; and not unfrequently a terrible punishment is the reward of their audacity. For all that, many of the emigrants, who have been so imprudent as to travel in small parties, have suffered at their hands, losing not only their property, but their lives; since hundreds of the bravest men have fallen by the arrows of these insignificant savages! Even the exploring parties of the United States government, accompanied by troops, have been attacked by them; and more than one officer has fallen a victim to their Ishmaelitish propensities.

It is not in open warfare that there is any dread of them. The smallest party of whites need not fear to encounter a hundred of them at once; but their attacks are made by stealth, and under cover of the night; and, as soon as they have succeeded in separating the horses or other animals from the travellers' camp, they drive them off so adroitly that pursuit is impossible. Whenever a grand blow has been struck — that is, a traveller has been murdered — they all disappear as if by magic; and for several days after not one is to be seen, upon whom revenge might be taken. The numerous "smokes," rising up out of the rocky defiles of the mountains, are then the only evidence that human beings are in the neighborhood of the travellers' camp.

The Digger is different from other North-American Indians, — both in physical organization and intellectua

character. So low is he in the scale of both, as to dispute with the African Bushman, the Andaman Islander, and the starving savage of Tierra del Fuego, the claim to that point in the transition, which is supposed to separate the monkey from the man. It has been variously awarded by ethnologists, and I as one have had my doubts, as to which of the three is deserving of the distinction. Upon mature consideration, however, I have come to the conclusion that the Digger is entitled to it.

This miserable creature is of a dark-brown or copper color, — the hue so generally known as characteristic of the American aborigines. He stands about five feet in height, — often under but rarely over this standard, — and his body is thin and meagre, resembling that of a frog stretched upon a fish-hook. The skin that covers it — especially that of an old Digger — is wrinkled and corrugated like the hide of an Asiatic rhinoceros, — with a surface as dry as parched buck-skin. His feet, turned in at the toes, — as with all the aborigines of America, — have some resemblance to human feet; but in the legs this resemblance ends. The lower limbs are almost destitute of calves, and the knee-pans are of immense size, — resembling a pair of pads or callosities, like those upon goats and antelopes. The face is broad and angular, with high cheek-bones; the eyes small, black, and sunken, and sparkle in their hollow sockets, not with true intelligence, but that sort of vivacity which may often be observed in the lower animals, especially in several species of monkeys. Throughout the whole physical composition of the Digger, there is only one thing that appears luxuriant, — and that is his hair

Like all Indians he is amply endowed in this respect, and long, black tresses — sometimes embrowned by the sun, and matted together with mud or other filth — hang over his naked shoulders. Generally he crops them.

In the summer months, the Digger's costume is extremely simple, — after the fashion of that worn by our common parents, Adam and Eve. In winter, however, the climate of his desert home is rigorous in the extreme, — the mountains over his head, and the plains under his feet, being often covered with snow. At this season he requires a garment to shelter his body from the piercing blast; and this he obtains by stitching together a few skins of the sage-hare, so as to form a kind of shirt or body-coat. He is not always rich enough to have even a good coat of this simple material; and its scanty skirt too often exposes his wrinkled limbs to the biting frost.

Between the Digger and his wife, or "squaw," there is not much difference either in costume or character. The latter may be distinguished, by being of less stature, rather than by any feminine graces in her physical or intellectual conformation. She might be recognized, too, by watching the employment of the family; for it is she who does nearly all the work, stitches the rabbit-skin shirt, digs the "yampa" and "kamas" roots, gathers the "mezquite" pods, and gets together the larder of "prairie crickets." Though lowest of all American Indians in the scale of civilization, the Digger resembles them all in this, — he regards himself as lord and master, and the woman as his slave.

As already observed, there is no such thing as a *tribe* of Diggers, — nothing of the nature of a political or

ganization; and the chief of their miserable little community — for sometimes there is a head man — is only he who is most regarded for his strength. Indeed, the nature of their country would not admit of a large number of them living together. The little valleys or "oases" — that occur at intervals along the banks of some lone desert stream, — would not, any one of them, furnish subsistence to more than a few individuals, — especially to savages ignorant of agriculture, — that is, not knowing how to *plant* or *sow*. The Diggers, however, if they know not how to *sow*, may be said to understand something about how to *reap*, since *root-digging* is one of their most essential employments, — that occupation from which they have obtained their distinctive appellation, in the language of the trappers.

Not being agriculturists, you will naturally conclude that they are either a pastoral people, or else a nation of hunters. But in truth they are neither one nor the other. They have no domestic animal, — many of them not even the universal dog; and as to hunting, there is no large game in their country. The buffalo does not range so far west; and if he did, it is not likely they could either kill or capture so formidable a creature; while the prong-horned antelope, which does inhabit their plains, is altogether too swift a creature, to be taken by any wiles a Digger might invent. The "big-horn," and the black and white-tailed species of deer, are also too shy and too fleet for their puny weapons; and as to the grizzly bear, the very sight of one is enough to give a Digger Indian the "chills."

If, then, they do not cultivate the ground, nor rear some kind of animals, nor yet live by the chase, how

do these people manage to obtain subsistence The answer to this question appears a dilemma, — since it has been already stated, that their country produces little else than the wild and worthless sage plant.

Were we speaking of an Indian of tropical America, or a native of the lovely islands of the great South Sea, there would be no difficulty whatever in accounting for his subsistence, — even though he neither planted nor sowed, tended cattle, nor yet followed the chase. In these regions of luxuriant vegetation, nature has been bountiful to her children ; and, it may be almost literally alleged that the loaf of bread grows spontaneously on the tree. But the very reverse is the case in the country of the Digger Indian. Even the hand of cultivation could scarce wring a crop from the sterile soil ; and Nature has provided hardly one article that deserves the name of food.

Perhaps you may fancy that the Digger is a fisherman ; and obtains his living from the stream, by the side of which he makes his dwelling. Not even this is permitted to him. It is true that his supposed kindred, the Shoshonees, occasionally follow the occupation of fishermen upon the banks of the Great Snake River, — which at certain seasons of the year swarms with the finest salmon ; but the poor Digger has no share in the finny spoil. The streams, that traverse his desert home, empty their waters into the briny bosom of the Great Salt Lake, — a true *Dead Sea*, where neither salmon, nor any other fish could live for an instant.

How then does the Digger obtain his food ? Is he a manufacturer, — and perforce a merchant, — who exchanges with some other tribe his manufactured goods

for provisions and "raw material?" Nothing of the sort. Least of all is he a manufacturer The hare-skin shirt is his highest effort in the line of textile fabrics; and his poor weak bow, and flint-tipped arrows, are the only tools he is capable of making. Sometimes he is even without these weapons; and may be seen with another, — a long stick, with a hook at one end, — the hook itself being the stump of a lopped branch, with its natural inclination to that which forms the stick. The object and purpose of this simple weapon we shall presently describe.

The Digger's wife may be seen with a weapon equally simple in its construction. This is also a stick — but a much shorter one — pointed at one end, and bearing some resemblance to a gardener's "dibble." Sometimes it is tipped with horn, — when this can be procured, — but otherwise the hard point is produced by calcining it in the fire. This tool is essentially an implement of husbandry, — as will presently appear.

Let us now clear up the mystery, and explain how the Digger maintains himself. There is not much mystery after all. Although, as already stated, his country produces nothing that could fairly be termed *food*, yet there are a few articles within his reach upon which a human being *might* subsist, — that is, might just keep body and soul together. One of these articles is the bean, or legume of the "mezquite" tree, of which there are many kinds throughout the desert region. They are known to Spanish Americans as *algarobia* trees; and, in the southern parts of the desert, grow to a considerable size, — often attaining the dimension of twenty to twenty-five feet in height.

They produce a large legume, filled with seeds and a pulp of sweetish-acid taste, — similar to that of the "honey-locust." These beans are collected in large quantities, by the squaw of the Digger, stowed away in grass-woven baskets, or sometimes only in heaps in a corner of his cave, or hovel, if he chance to have one. If so, it is a mere wattle of artemisia, thatched and "chinked" with grass.

The mezquite seeds, then, are the *bread* of the Digger; but, bad as is the quality, the supply is often far behind the demands of his hungry stomach. For vegetables, he has the "yampah" root, an umbelliferous plant, which grows along the banks of the streams This, with another kind, known as "kamas" or "quamash" (*Camassia esculenta*), is a spontaneous production; and the digging for these roots forms, at a certain season of the year, the principal occupation of the women. The "dibble"-like instrument already described is the *root-digger*. The roots here mentioned, before being eaten, have to undergo a process of cooking. The yampah is boiled in a very ingenious manner; but this piece of ingenuity is not native to the Shoshokees, and has been obtained from their more clever kindred, the Snakes. The pot is a *wooden one;* and yet they can boil meat in it, or make soup if they wish! Moreover, it is only a basket, a mere vessel of wicker-work! How, then, can water be boiled in it? If you had not been already told how it is done, it would no doubt puzzle you to find out.

But most likely you have read of a somewhat similar vessel among the Chippewa Indians, — especially the tribe known as the "Assineboins," or stone-boilers' —

who cook their fish or flesh in pots made of birch-bark. The phrase *stone-boilers* will suggest to you how the difficulty is got over. The birch-bark pot is not set over fire; but stones are heated and thrown into it, — of course already filled with water. The hot stones soon cause the water to simmer, and fresh ones are added until it boils, and the meat is sufficiently cooked. By just such a process the "Snakes" cook their salmon and deer's flesh, — their wicker pots being woven of so close a texture that not even water can pass through the interstices.

It is not often, however, that the Digger is rich enough to have one of these wicker pots, — and when he has, he is often without anything to put into it.

The *kamas* roots are usually baked in a hole dug in the earth, and heated by stones taken from the fire. It requires nearly two days to bake them properly; and then, when taken out of the "oven," the mass bears a strong resemblance to soft glue or size, and has a sweet and rather agreeable taste, — likened to that of baked pears or quinces.

I have not yet specified the whole of the Digger's larder. Were he to depend altogether on the roots and seeds already mentioned, he would often have to starve, — and in reality he often *does* starve, — for, even with the additional supplies which his sterile soil scantily furnishes him, he is frequently the victim of famine.

There may be a bad season of the mezquite-crop, and the bears — who are as cunning "diggers" as he — sometimes destroy his "plantations" of yampah and kamas. He finds a resource, however, in the *prairie-cricket*, an insect — or reptile, you may call it — of the

gryllus tribe, of a dark-brown color, and more like a bug than any other crawler. These, at certain seasons of the year, make their appearance upon the desert-plains, and in such numbers that the ground appears to be alive with them. An allied species has of late years become celebrated: on account of a visit paid by vast numbers of them to the Mormon plantations; where, as may be remembered, they devastated the crops, — just as the locusts do in Africa, — causing a very severe season of famine among these isolated people. It may be remembered also, that flocks of white birds followed the movements of these American locusts, — preying upon them, and thinning their multitudinous hosts.

These birds were of the gull genus (*Larus*), and one of the most beautiful of the species. They frequent the shores and islands of the rivers of *Prairie-land*, living chiefly upon such insects as are found in the neighborhood of their waters. It was but natural, therefore, they should follow the locusts, or "grasshoppers," as the Mormons termed them; but the *pseudo-prophet* of these deluded people could not suffer to pass such a fine opportunity of proving his divine inspiration: which he did by audaciously declaring that the birds were "heaven-born," and had been sent by the Almighty (in obedience to a prayer from him, the prophet) to rid the country of the pest of the grasshoppers!

These prairie-crickets are of a dark-brown color, — not unlike the *gryllus migratorius* of Africa, and with very similar habits. When settled thickly upon the ground, the whole surface assumes a darkish hue, as if covered with crape; and when they are all in motion, — creeping to and fro in search of their food, — a very singular

effect is produced. At this time they do not take to wing; though they attempt to get out of the way, by making short hops from place to place, and crawling with great rapidity. Notwithstanding their efforts to escape, hundreds of them are "squashed" beneath the foot of the pedestrian, or hoofs of the traveller's horse.

These crickets, with several bug-like insects of different species, furnish the Digger with an important article of food. It may appear a strange provender for a human stomach; but there is nothing unnatural about it, — any more than about the eating of shrimps or prawns; and it will be remembered that the Bushmen, and many other tribes of South Africa eat the *gryllus migratorius;* while, in the northern part of that same continent, many nations regard them as a proper article of food. Though some writers have asserted, that it was the legume of the locust-tree (an acacia) which was eaten by St. John the Baptist in the wilderness, it is easily proved that such was not the case. That his food was the locust (*gryllus migratorius*) and wild honey, is strictly and literally true; and at the present day, were you to visit the "wilderness" mentioned by the Apostle, you might see people living upon "locusts and wild-honey," just as they did eighteen hundred years ago.

The Diggers *cook* their crickets sometimes by boiling them in the pots aforementioned, and sometimes by "roasting." They also mix them with the mezquite seeds and pulp, — the whole forming a kind of plum-pudding, or "cricket-pasty," — or, as it is jocosely termed by the trappers, "cricket-cake."

Their mode of collecting the grasshoppers is not without some display of ingenuity. When the insects are in abundance, there is not much difficulty in obtaining a sufficient supply; but this is not always the case. Sometimes they appear very sparsely upon the plains; and, being nimble in their movements, are not easily laid hold of. Only one could be taken at a time; and, by gleaning in this way, a very limited supply would be obtained. To remedy this, the Diggers have invented a somewhat ingenious contrivance for capturing them wholesale, — which is effected in the following manner: — When the whereabouts of the grasshoppers has been discovered, a round hole — of three or four feet in diameter, and of about equal depth — is scooped out in the centre of the plain. It is shaped somewhat after the fashion of a kiln; and the earth, that has been taken out, is carried out of the way.

The Digger community then all turn out — men, women, and children — and deploy themselves into a wide circle, enclosing as large a tract as their numbers will permit. Each individual is armed with a stick, with which he beats the sage-bushes, and makes other violent demonstrations: the object being to frighten the grasshoppers, and cause them to move inward towards the pit that has been dug. The insects, thus beset, move as directed, — gradually approaching the centre, — while the "beaters" follow in a circle constantly lessening in circumference. After a time the crickets, before only thinly scattered over the plain, — grow more crowded as the space becomes contracted; until at length the surface is covered with a black moving swarm and the beaters, still pressing upon them, and

driving them onward, force the whole body pell-mell over the edges of the pit.

Bunches of grass, already provided are now flung over them, and upon that a few shovelfuls of earth or sand; and then — horrible to relate! — a large pile of artemisia-stalks is heaped upon the top and set on fire! The result is that, in a few minutes, the poor grasshoppers are smoked to death, and parched at the same time — so as to be ready for eating, whenever the *débris* of the fire has been removed.

The prairie-cricket is not the only article of the *flesh-meat* kind, found in the larder of the Digger. Another animal furnishes him with an occasional meal. This is the "sage-hare," known to hunters as the "sage-rabbit," but to naturalists as the *lepus artemisia*. It is a very small animal, — less in size than the common rabbit, — though it is in reality a true hare. It is of a silvery, or whitish-gray color — which adapts it to the hue of the *artemisia* bushes on the stalks and berries of which it feeds.

It is from the skins of this animal, that the Digger women manufacture the rabbit-skin shirts, already described. Its flesh would not be very agreeable to a European palate, — even with the addition of an onion, — for it has the sage flavor to such a degree, as to be as bitter as wormwood itself. An onion with it would not be tasted! But tastes differ, and by the Digger the flesh of the sage-hare is esteemed one of the nicest delicacies. He hunts it, therefore, with the greatest assiduity; and the chase of this insignificant animal is to the Digger, what the hunt of the stag, the elephant, or the wild boar, is to hunters of a more pretentious ambition.

With his bow and arrows he frequently succeeds in killing a single hare; but this is not always so easy, — since the sage-hare, like all of its kind, is shy, swift, and cunning. Its color, closely resembling the hue of the artemisia foliage, is a considerable protection to it; and it can hide among these bushes, where they grow thickly — as they generally do — over the surface of the ground.

But the Digger is not satisfied with the scanty and uncertain supply, which his weak bow and arrows would enable him to obtain. As in the case of the grasshoppers, he has contrived a plan for capturing the sage-hares by wholesale.

This he accomplishes by making a "surround," and driving the animals, not into a *pit*, but into a *pound*. The pound is constructed something after the same fashion as that used by the Chippewas, and other northern Indians, for capturing the herds of reindeer; in other words, it is an enclosure, entered by a narrow mouth — from the *jaws* of which mouth, two fences are carried far out into the plain, in a gradually diverging direction. For the deer and other large animals, the fences of the pound — as also those of the funnel that conducts to it, require to be made of strong stakes, stockaded side by side; but this work, as well as the timber with which to construct it, is far beyond the reach of the Digger. His enclosure consists of a mere wattle of artemisia stalks and branches, woven into a row of those already standing — with here and there a patching of rude nets, made of roots and grass. The height is not over three feet and the sage-hare might easily spring over it; but the stupid creature, when once "in the pound," never thinks

of looking upward; but continues to dash its little skull against the wattle, until it is either "clubbed" by the Digger, or impaled upon one of his obsidian arrows.

Other quadrupeds, constituting a portion of the Digger's food, are several species of "gophers," or sand-rats, ground-squirrels, and marmots. In many parts of the Great Basin, the small rodents abound: dwelling between the crevices of rocks, or honeycombing the dry plains with their countless burrows. The Digger captures them by various wiles. One method is by shooting them with blunt arrows; but the more successful plan is, by setting a trap at the entrance to their earthen caves. It is the "figure of 4 trap," which the Digger employs for this purpose, and which he constructs with ingenuity, — placing a great many around a "warren," and often taking as many as fifty or sixty "rats" in a single day!

In weather too cold for the gophers to come out of their caves, the Digger then "digs" for them: thus further entitling him to his special appellation.

That magnificent bird, the "cock of the plains," sometimes furnishes the Digger with "fowl" for his dinner. This is a bird of the grouse family (*tetrao urophasianus*), and the largest species that is known, — exceeding in size the famed "cock of the woods" of northern Europe. A full-fledged cock of the plains is as large as an eagle; and, unlike most of the grouse kind, has a long, narrow body. His plumage is of a silvery gray color — produced by a mottle of black and white, — no doubt, given him by a nature to assimilate him to the hue of the artemisia, — amidst which he habitually dwells, and the berries of which furnish him with most of his food.

He is remarkable for two large *goitre-like* swellings on the breast, covered with a sort of hair instead of feathers; but, though a fine-looking large bird, and a grouse too, his flesh is bitter and unpalatable — even more so than that of the sage-hare. For all that, it is a delicacy to the Digger, and a rare one; for the cock of the plains is neither plentiful, nor easily captured when seen.

There are several other small animals — both quadrupeds and birds — inhabiting Digger-land, upon which an occasional meal is made. Indeed, the food of the Digger is sufficiently varied. It is not in the quality but the quantity he finds most cause of complaint: for with all his energies he never gets enough. In the summer season, however, he is less stinted. Then the berries of the buffalo-bush are ripe; and these, resembling currants, he collects in large quantities, — placing his rabbit-skin wrapper under the bush, and shaking down the ripe fruit in showers. A *mélange* of prairie-crickets and buffalo-berries is esteemed by the Digger, as much as would be the best specimen of a "currant-cake" in any nursery in Christendom!

The Digger finds a very curious species of edible bug, which builds its nest on the ledges of the cliffs, — especially those that overhang a stream. These nests are of a conical or pine-apple shape, and about the size of this fruit.

This bug, — not yet classified or described by entomologists, — is of a dark brown color, about the size of the ordinary cockroach; and when boiled is considered a proper article of food, — not only by the unfastidious Diggers, but by Indians of a more epicurean *goût*.

Besides the yampah and kamas, there are several

other edible roots found in the Digger country. Among others may be mentioned a species of thistle (*circium virginiarum*), — the root of which grows to the size of an ordinary carrot, and is almost as well flavored. It requires a great deal of roasting, or boiling, before it is sufficiently cooked to be eaten.

The *kooyah* is another article of food still more popular among Digger gourmands. This is the root of the *valeriana edulis*. It is of a bright-yellow color, and grows to a considerable size. It has the characteristic odor of the well-known plant; but not so strong as in the prepared substance of *valerian*. The plant itself does not grow in the arid soil of the desert, but rather in the rich fertile bottoms of the streams, or along the shores of marshy lakes, — in company with the kamas and yampah. It is when these roots are in season, that the Shoshokees most frequent such localities; and, indeed, this same season is the time when all other articles of Digger food are plenteous enough, — the summer The winter months are to him the "tight times."

In some parts of the desert country, as already observed, grow species of pines, with edible cones, — or rather edible seeds which the cones contain. These seeds resemble nuts, and are about the size of the common filberts.

More than one species of pine produces this sort of food; but in the language of the Spanish Californians and New Mexicans, they are all indifferently termed *piñon*, and the seeds simply *piñones*, or "piñons." Where these are within the reach of the Digger, — as they are in some districts, — he is then well provided for; since the piñons, when roasted, not only form an agreeable

and nutritious article of food, but can be stored up as a winter stock, — that will keep for a considerable time, without danger of spoiling, or growing too stale.

Such is the *commissariat* of the Digger Indian; and, poor in quality though it be, there are times when he cannot obtain a sufficient supply of it. At such times he has recourse to food of a still meaner kind, — to roots, scarce eatable, and even to the seeds of several species of grass! Worms, grubs, the *agama cornuta*, or "horned-frog of the prairies," with other species of lizards, become his sole resource; and in the search and capture of these he occupies himself from morning to night.

It is in this employment that he finds use for the long sapling, with the hooked end upon it, — the hook being used for dragging the lizards out of clefts in the rocks, within which they have sought shelter. In the accomplishment of this, the Digger displays an adroitness that astonishes the traveller: often "jerking" the reptile out of some dark crevice within which it might be supposed to have found a retreat secure from all intruders.

Many other curious habits might be related of this abject and miserable race of human beings; but perhaps enough has been detailed, to secure them a place in the list of our "odd people."

THE GUARAONS, OR PALM-DWELLERS.

YOUNG reader, I may take it for granted that you have heard of the great river Orinoco, — one of the largest rivers not only of South America, but in the world. By entering at its mouth, and ascending to its source, you would have to make a journey of about one thousand five hundred miles; but this journey, so far from being direct, or in a straight line, would carry you in a kind of spiral curve, — very much like the figure 6, the apex of the figure representing the mouth of the river. In other words, the Orinoco, rising in the unexplored mountains of Spanish Guiana, first runs eastward; and then, having turned gradually to every point of the compass, resumes its easterly course, continuing in this direction till it empties its mighty flood into the Atlantic Ocean.

Not by one mouth, however. On the contrary, long before the Orinoco approaches the sea, its channel separates into a great many branches (or "caños," as they are called in the language of the country), each of which, slowly meandering in its own course, reaches the coast by a separate mouth, or "boca." Of these caños there are about fifty, embracing within their ramifications a

"delta" nearly half as large as England! Though they have all been distinguished by separate names, only three or four of them are navigable by ships of any considerable size; and, except to the few pilots whose duty it is to conduct vessels into that main channel of the river, the whole delta of the Orinoco may be regarded as a country still unexplored, and almost unknown. Indeed, the same remark might be made of the whole river, were it not for the magnificent monument left by the great traveller Von Humboldt, — whose narrative of the exploration of the Orinoco is, beyond all comparison, the finest book of travels yet given to the world. To him are we chiefly indebted for our knowledge of the Orinoco; since the Spanish nation, who, for more than three centuries, have held undisputed possession of this mighty stream, have left us scarce a line about it worth either credit or record.

It is now more than half a century, since the date of Humboldt's "Personal Narrative;" and yet, strange to say, during all that period, scarce an item has been added to our knowledge of the Orinoco, beyond what this scientific traveller had already told us. Indeed, there is not much to say: for there has been little change in the river since then, — either in the aspect of nature, or the condition of man. What change there has been possesses rather a retrograde, than a progressive character. Still, now, as then, on the banks of the Orinoco, we behold a languid commerce, — characteristic of the decaying Spano-American race, — and the declining efforts of a selfish and bigoted missionary zeal, whose boasted aim of "christianizing and civilizing" has ended only in producing a greater *brutalization*.

After three centuries of *paternosters* and bell-ringing, the red savage of the Orinoco returns to the worship of his ancestral gods, — or to no worship at all, — and for this backsliding he can, perhaps, give a sufficient reason.

Pardon me, young reader, for this digression. It is not my purpose to discuss the polemical relations of those who inhabit the banks of the Orinoco; but to give you some account of a very singular people who dwell near its mouth, — upon the numerous caños, already mentioned as constituting its delta. These are the "Guaraons," — a tribe of Indians, — usually considered as a branch of the Great Carib family, but forming a community among themselves of seven or eight thousand souls; and differing so much from most other savages in their habits and mode of life, as fairly to entitle them to the appellation of an "Odd People."

The Orinoco, like many other large rivers, is subject to a periodical rise and fall; that is, once every year, the river swells to a great height above its ordinary level. The swelling or "flood" was for a long time supposed to proceed from the melting of snow upon the cordilleras of the Andes, — in which mountains several of the tributaries of the Orinoco have their rise. This hypothesis, however, has been shown to be an incorrect one: since the main stream of the Orinoco does not proceed from the Andes, nor from any other snow-capped mountains; but has its origin, as already stated, in the *sierras* of Guiana. The true cause of its periodical rising, therefore, is the vast amount of rain which falls within the tropics; and this is itself occasioned by the sun's course across the torrid zone, which is also the

cause of its being periodical or "annual." So exact is the time at which these rains fall, and produce the floods of the Orinoco, that the inhabitants of the river can tell, within a few days, when the rising will commence, and when the waters will reach their lowest!

The flood season very nearly corresponds to our own summer, — the rise commencing in April, and the river being at its maximum height in August, — while the minimum is again reached in December. The height to which the Orinoco rises has been variously estimated by travellers: some alleging it to be nearly one hundred feet; while others estimate it to be only fifty, or even less! The reason of this discrepancy may be, that the measurements have been made at different points, — at each of which, the actual height to which the flood attains, may be greater or less than at the others. At any one place, however, the rise is the same — or very nearly so — in successive years. This is proved by observations made at the town of Angostura, — the lowest Spanish settlement of any importance upon the Orinoco. There, nearly in front of the town, a little rocky islet towers up in the middle of the river; the top of which is just fifty feet above the bed of the stream, when the volume of water is at its minimum. A solitary tree stands upon the pinnacle of this rock; and each year, when the water is in full flood, the tree alone is visible, — the islet being entirely submerged. From this peculiar circumstance, the little islet has obtained the name of "Orinocometer," or measurer of the Orinoco.

The rise here indicated is about fifty feet; but it does not follow from this, that throughout its whole

course the river should annually rise to so great a height. In reality it does not.

At Angostura, as the name imports, the river is *narrowed* to less than half its usual width, — being there confined between high banks that impinge upon its channel. Above and below, it widens again; and, no doubt, in proportion to this widening will the annual rise be greater or less. In fact, at many places, the width of the stream is no longer that of its ordinary channel; but, on the contrary, a vast "freshet" or inundation, covering the country for hundreds of miles, — here flooding over immense marshes or grassy plains, and hiding them altogether, — there flowing among forests of tall trees, the tops of which alone project above the tumult of waters! These inundations are peculiarly observable in the *delta* of the Orinoco, — where every year, in the months of July and August, the whole surface of the country becomes changed into a grand fresh-water sea: the tops of the trees alone rising above the flood, and proclaiming that there is *land* at the bottom.

At this season the ordinary channels, or *caños*, would be obliterated; and navigation through them become difficult or impossible, but for the tree-tops; which, after the manner of "buoys" and signal-marks, serve to guide the pilots through the intricate mazes of the "bocas del Orinoco."

Now it is this annual inundation, and the semi-submergence of these trees under the flood, that has given origin to the peculiar people of whom we are about to speak, — the Guaraons; or, perhaps, we should rather say, from these causes have arisen their strange habits

and modes of life which entitle them to be considered an "odd people."

During the period of the inundation, if you should sail up the southern or principal caño of the Orinoco, — known as the "boca de navios," or "ships' mouth," — and keep your face to the northward, you would behold the singular spectacle of a forest growing out of the water! In some places you would perceive single trees, with the upper portion of their straight, branchless trunks rising vertically above the surface, and crowned by about a dozen great fan-shaped leaves, radiating outwards from their summits. At other places, you would see many crowded together, their huge fronds meeting, and forming close clumps, or "water groves," whose deep-green color contrasts finely as it flings its reflection on the glistening surface below.

Were it night, — and your course led you through one of the smaller caños in the northern part of the delta, — you would behold a spectacle yet more singular, and more difficult to be explained; a spectacle that astounded and almost terrified the bold navigators, who first ventured to explore these intricate coasts. You would not only perceive a forest, growing out of the water; but, high up among the tops of the trees, you would behold blazing fires, — not the conflagration of the trees themselves, as if the forest were in flames, — but fires regularly built, glowing as from so many furnaces, and casting their red glare upwards upon the broad green leaves, and downwards upon the silvery surface of the water!

If you should chance to be near enough to these fires, you would see cooking utensils suspended over them human forms, both of men and women, seated or squat-

ting around them; other human forms, flitting like shadows among the tops of the trees; and down below, upon the surface of the water, a fleet of canoes (*periaguas*), fastened with their mooring-ropes to the trunks. All this would surprise you, — as it did the early navigators, — and, very naturally, you would inquire what it could mean. Fires apparently suspended in the air! human beings moving about among the tops of the trees, talking laughing, and gesticulating! in a word, acting just as any other savages would do, — for these human beings *are* savages, — amidst the tents of their encampment, or the houses of their village. In reality it is a village upon which you are gazing, — a village suspended in the air, — a village of the Guaraon Indians!

Let us approach nearer; let us steal into this water-village — for it would not be always safe to enter it, except by stealth — and see how its singular habitations are constructed, as also in what way their occupants manage to get their living. The village under our observation is now, — at the period of inundation, — nearly a hundred miles from shore, or from any dry land: it will be months before the waters can subside; and, even then, the country around will partake more of the nature of a quagmire, than of firm soil; impassable to any human being, — though *not* to a Guaraon, as we shall presently see. It is true, the canoes, already mentioned, might enable their owners to reach the firm shores beyond the delta; and so they do at times; but it would be a voyage too long and too arduous to be made often, — as for the supply of food and other daily wants, — and it is not for this purpose the canoes are kept. No these Guaraons visit terra firma only at intervals; and

then for purposes of trade with a portion of their own and other tribes who dwell there; but they permanently reside within the area of the inundated forests; where they are independent, not only of foreign aggression, but also for their supply of all the necessaries of life. In these forests, whether flooded or not, they procure everything of which they stand in need, — they there find, to use an old-fashioned phrase, "meat, drink, washing, and lodging." In other words: were the inundation to continue forever, and were the Guaraons entirely prohibited from intercourse with the dry land, they could still find subsistence in this, their home upon the waters.

Whence comes their subsistence? No doubt you will say that fish is their food; and drink, of course, they have in abundance; but this would not be the true explanation. It is true they eat fish, and turtle, and the flesh of the *manatee*, or "fish-cow," — since the capturing of these aquatic creatures is one of the chief occupations of the Guaraons, — but they are ofttimes entirely without such food; for, it is to be observed, that, during the period of the inundations fish are not easily caught, sometimes not at all. At these times the Guaraons would starve — since, like all other savages, they are improvident — were it not that the singular region they inhabit supplies them with another article of food, — one that is inexhaustible.

What is this food, and from whence derived? It will scarce surprise you to hear that it is the produce of the trees already mentioned; but perhaps you *will* deem it singular when I tell you that the trees of this great *water-forest* are all of one kind, — all of the same species, — so that here we have the remarkable fact of a single

species of vegetable, growing without care or cultivation, and supplying all the wants of man, — his food, clothing, fuel, utens ls, ropes, houses, and boats, — not even drink excepted, as will presently be seen.

The name of this wonderful tree? "Itá," the Guaraons call it; though it is more generally known as "morichi" among the Spanish inhabitants of the Orinoco; but I shall here give my young reader an account of it, from which he will learn something more than its name.

The *itá* is a true palm-tree, belonging to the genus *mauritia;* and, I may remark, that notwithstanding the resemblance in sound, the name of the genus is not derived from the words "morichi," "murichi," or "muriti," all of which are different Indian appellations of this tree. *Mauritia* is simply a Latinized designation borrowed from the name of Prince Maurice of Nassau, in whose honor the genus was named. The resemblance, therefore, is merely accidental. I may add, too, that there are many species of *mauritia* growing in different parts of tropical America, — some of them palms of large size, and towering height, with straight, smooth trunks; while others are only tiny little trees, scarce taller than a man, and with their trunks thickly covered with conical protuberances or spines.

Some of them, moreover, affect a high, dry soil, beyond the reach of floods; while others do not prosper, except on tracts habitually marshy, or annually covered with inundations. Of these latter, the *itá* is perhaps the most conspicuous; since we have already stated, that for nearly six months of the year it grows literally out of the water.

Like all its congeners, the itá is a "fan-palm;" that is, its leaves, instead of being *pinnately* divided, as in most species of palms, or altogether *entire*, as in some few, radiate from the midrib of the leaf-stalk, into a broad palmated shape, bearing considerable resemblance to a fan when opened to its full extent. At the tips these leaflets droop slightly, but at that end where they spring out of the midrib, they are stiff and rigid. The petiole, or leafstalk itself, is long, straight, and thick; and where it clasps the stem or trunk, is swollen out to a foot in width, hollowed, or concave on the upper side. A full-grown leaf, with its petiole, is a wonderful object to look upon. The stalk is a solid beam full twelve feet in length, and the leaf has a diameter of nearly as much. Leaf and stalk together make a load, just as much as one man can carry upon his shoulders!

Set about a dozen of these enormous leaves on the summit of a tall cylindrical column of five feet in circumference, and about one hundred in height, — place them with their stalks clasping or sheathing its top, — so that the spreading fans will point in every direction outwards, inclining slightly upwards; do this, and you will have the great *morichi* palm. Perhaps, you may see the trunk swollen at its middle or near the top, — so that its lower part is thinner than above, — but more often the huge stem is a perfect cylinder. Perhaps you may see several of the leaves drooping downward, as if threatening to fall from the tree; you may even see them upon the ground where they have fallen, and a splendid ruin they appear. You may see again rising upward out of the very centre of the crown of foliage, a straight, thick-pointed column. This is the young leaf

in process of development, — its tender leaflets yet unopened, and closely clasped together. But the fervid tropical sun soon produces expansion; and a new fan takes the place of the one that has served its time and fallen to the earth, — there to decay, or to be swept off by the flood of waters.

Still more may be noticed, while regarding this noble palm. Out of that part of the trunk, — where it is embraced by the sheathing bases of the petioles, — at a certain season of the year, a large spathe will be seen to protrude itself, until it has attained a length of several feet. This spathe is a bract-like sheath, of an imperfect tubular form. It bursts open; and then appears the huge spadix of flowers, of a whitish-green color, arranged along the flower-stalk in rows, — *pinnately*. It will be observed, moreover, that these spadices are different upon different trees; for it must be remembered that the mauritia palm is *diœcious*, — that is, having the female flowers on one tree, and the male or staminiferous flowers upon another. After the former have glowed for a time in the heat of the sun, and received the fertilizing pollen wafted to them by the breeze, — carried by bee or bird, or transported by some unknown and mysterious agency of nature, — the fruits take form and ripen. These, when fully ripe, have attained to the size of a small apple, and are of a very similar form. They are covered with small brown, smooth scales, — giving them somewhat the appearance of fir-cones, except that they are roundish instead of being cone-shaped. Underneath the scales there is a thinnish layer of pulp, and then the stone or *nut*. A single spadix will carry carry several hundreds — thousands, I might say — of

these nuts; and the whole bunch is a load equal to the strength of two ordinary men!

Such is the itá palm. Now for its uses, — the uses to which it is put by the Guaraons.

When the Guaraon wishes to build himself a habitation, he does not begin by digging a foundation in the earth. In the spongy soil on which he stands, that would be absurd. At a few inches below the surface he would reach water; and he might dig to a vast depth without finding firm ground. But he has no idea of laying a foundation upon the ground, or of building a house there. He knows that in a few weeks the river will be rising; and would overtop his roof, however high he might make it. His foundation, therefore, instead of being laid in the ground, is placed far above it, — just so far, that when the inundation is at its height the floor of his dwelling will be a foot or two above it. He does not take this height from guesswork. That would be a perilous speculation. He is guided by certain marks upon the trunks of palm-trees, — notches which he has himself made on the preceding year, or the natural watermark, which he is able to distinguish by certain appearances on the trees. This point once determined, he proceeds to the building of his house.

A few trunks are selected, cut down, and then split into beams of sufficient length. Four fine trees, standing in a quadrangle, have already been selected to form the corner-posts. In each of these, just above the watermark, is cut a deep notch with a horizontal base to serve as a rest for the cross-beams that are to form the foundation of the structure. Into these notches the beams are hoisted, — by means of ropes, — and there

securely tied. To reach the point where the platform is to be erected — sometimes a very high elevation — ladders are necessary; and these are of native manufacture, — being simply the trunk of a palm-tree, with notches cut in it for the toes of the climber. These afterwards serve as a means of ascending and descending to the surface of the water, during the period of its rise and fall. The main timbers having been firmly secured in their places, cross-beams are laid upon them, the latter being either pieces of the split trunks, or, what is usually easier to obtain, the petioles of the great leaves, — each of which, as already stated, forms of itself a large beam, twelve feet in length and from six to twelves inches in breadth. These are next secured at both ends by ropes of the palm-fibre.

Next comes a layer of palm-leaves, the strong, tough leaflets serving admirably as laths to uphold the coating of mud, which is laid thickly over them. The mud is obtained from below, without difficulty, and in any quantity required; and when trowelled smooth, and dry, — which it soon becomes under the hot sun, — constitutes an excellent floor, where a fire may be kindled without danger of burning either the laths or joists underneath.

As yet the Guaraon has completed only the floor of his dwelling, but that is his principal labor. He cares not for walls, — neither sides nor gables. There is no cold, frosty weather to chill him in his tropical home, — no snow to be kept out. The rain alone, usually falling in a vertical direction, has to be guarded against; and from this he secures himself by a second platform of lighter materials, covered with mats, which he has

already woven for the purpose, and with palm-leaflets so placed as to cast off the heaviest shower. This also shelters him against the burning sun, — an enemy which he dreads even more than the rain.

His house is now finished; and, with the exception of the mud floor, is all of itá palm, — beams, cross-timbers, laths, ropes, and mats. The ropes he has obtained by stripping off the epidermis of the full-grown leaflets, and then twisting it into cordage of any thickness required. For this purpose it is equal to hemp. The mats he has made from the same material, — and well does he, or rather his wife — for this is usually the work of the females — know how to plait and weave them.

Having completed the building of his aerial dwelling, the Guaraon would eat. He has fish, which has been caught in the neighboring caño, — perhaps turtle, — perhaps the flesh of the manatee, or the alligator, — for his palate is by no means of a delicate fineness, and will not refuse a steak from the tail of the American crocodile. But when the flood time is on, fish become scarce, or cannot be had at all, — no more can turtles, or sea-cows, or alligators. Besides, scarce or plenty, something else is wanted to vary the diet. Bread is wanted; and for this the Guaraon has not far to go. The itá again befriends him, for he finds, upon splitting open its trunk, a large deposit of medullary pith or feculæ; which, when submitted to the process of bruising or grating, and afterwards stirred in water, forms a sediment at the bottom of the vessel, a substance not only eatable, but equal in excellence to the well-known produce of the *sago* palm.

This farinaceous pith, formed into cakes and roasted

over the fire, — the fuel being supplied by leaves and leafstalks, — constitutes the *yuruma*, — the daily bread of the Guaraon.

The yuruma, or rather the sago out of which it is made, is not obtainable at all times. It is the male palm which produces it; and it must be extracted just as the tree is about to expand its spadix of flowers. The same curious fact is observed with regard to the *maguey*, or great American aloe, which produces the drink called "pulque." To procure the sap in any considerable quantity, the maguey must be tapped just on that day when the flower-stalk is about to shoot upward from among the leaves.

The Guaraon, having eaten his yuruma, would drink. Does he have recourse to the water which flows in abundance beneath his dwelling? No. On ordinary occasions he may quench his thirst in that way; but he wishes for some beverage more cheering. Again the itá yields it without stint, and even gives him a choice. He may tap the trunk, and draw forth the sap; which, after being submitted to a process of fermentation, becomes a wine, — "murichi wine," a beverage which, if the Guaraon be so inclined, and drink to excess, will make him "as drunk as a lord"!

But he may indulge in a less dangerous, and more delicate drink, also furnished by his favorite itá. This he obtains by flinging a few of the nuts into a vessel of water, and leaving them awhile to ferment; then beating them with a pestle, until the scales and pulp are detached; and, lastly, passing the water through a sieve of palm fibre. This done, the drink is ready to be quaffed. For all these purposes tools and utensils are

required, but the itá also furnishes them. The trunk can be scooped out into dishes; or cut into spoons, ladles, and trenchers. The flower "spathe" also gives him cups and saucers. Iron tools, such as hatchets and knives, he has obtained from commerce with Europeans; but, before their arrival in the New World, the Guaraon had his hatchet of flint, and his knife-blade of obsidian; and even now, if necessary, he could manage without metal of any kind.

The bow and arrows which he uses are obtained from the tough, sinewy petiole of the leaf; so is the harpoon-spear with which he strikes the great manatee, the porpoise, and the alligator; the canoe, light as cork, which carries him through the intricate channels of the delta, is the hollow trunk of a morichi palm. His nets and lines, and the cloth which he wears around his loins, are all plaited or woven from the young leaflets before they have expanded into the fan-like leaf.

Like other beings, the Guaraon must at times sleep. Where does he stretch his body, — on the floor? — on a mat? No. He has already provided himself with a more luxurious couch, — the "rede," or hammock, which he suspends between two trees; and in this he reclines, not only during the night, but by day, when the sun is too hot to admit of violent exertion. His wife has woven the hammock most ingeniously. She has cut off the column of young leaves, that projects above the crown of the morichi. This she has shaken, until the tender leaflets become detached from each other and fall apart. Each she now strips of its outer covering, — a thin, ribbon-like pellicle of a pale yellow color, — which shrivels up almost like a thread. These she ties

into bundles, leaving them to dry awhile; after which she spins them into strings, or, if need be, twists them into larger cords. She then places two horizontal rods or poles about six feet apart, and doubles the string over them some forty or fifty times. This constitutes the *woof;* and the *warp* is obtained by cross-strings twisted or tied to each of the longitudinal ones, at intervals of seven or eight inches. A strong cord, made from the epidermis of the full-grown leaves, is now passed through the loop of all the strings, drawn together at both ends, and the poles are then pulled out. The hammock, being finished and hung up between two trees, provides the naked Indian with a couch, upon which he may repose as luxuriantly as a monarch on his bed of down. Thus, then, does a single tree furnish everything which man, in his primitive simplicity, may require. No wonder that the enthusiastic missionaries have given to the morichi-palm the designation of "arbol de vida" (tree of life).

It may be asked why does the Guaraon live in such a strange fashion, — especially when on all sides around him there are vast tracts of *terra firma* upon which he might make his dwelling, and where he could, with far less difficulty, procure all the necessaries, and many of the luxuries of life? The question is easily answered; and this answer will be best given by asking others in return. Why do the Esquimaux and Laplanders cling to their inhospitable home upon the icy coasts of the Arctic Sea? Why do tribes of men take to the cold, barren mountains, and dwell there, within sight of lovely and fertile plains? Why do others betake themselves to the arid steppes and dreary recesses of the desert?

No doubt the Guaraon, by powerful enemies forced from his aboriginal home upon the firm soil, first sought refuge in the marshy flats where we now encounter him: there he found security from pursuit and oppression; there — even at the expense of other luxuries — he was enabled to enjoy the sweetest of all, — the luxury of liberty.

What was only a necessity at first, soon became a habit; and that habit is now an essential part of his nature. Indeed, it is not so long since the necessity itself has been removed.

Even at the present hour, the Guaraon would not be secure, were he to stray too far from his sheltering marshes, — for, sad though it be to say so, the poor Indian, when beyond the protection of his tribe, is in many parts of South America still treated as a slave. In the *delta* he feels secure. No slave-hunter, — no enemy can follow him there. Even the foeman of his own race cannot compete with him in crossing the wide flats of spongy quagmire, — over which, from long habit, he is enabled to glide with the lightness and fleetness of a bird. During the season of overflow, or when the waters have fallen to their lowest, he is equally secure from aggression or pursuit; and, no doubt, in spite of missionary zeal, — in spite of the general progress of civilization, — in this savage security he will long remain.

THE LAPLANDERS.

One of the oldest "odd" people with which we are acquainted are the Laps or Laplanders. For many centuries the more civilized nations of Europe have listened to strange accounts, told by travellers of these strange people; many of these accounts being exaggerated, and others totally untrue. Some of the old travellers, being misled by the deerskin dresses worn by the Laps, believed, or endeavored to make others believe, that they were born with hairy skins like wild beasts; and one traveller represented that they had only a single eye, and that in the middle of the breast! This very absurd conception about a one-eyed people gained credit, even so late as the time of Sir Walter Raleigh, — with this difference, that the locality of these gentry with the odd "optic" was South America instead of Northern Europe.

In the case of the poor Laplander, not the slightest exaggeration is needed to render him an interesting study, either to the student of ethnology, or to the merely curious reader. He needs neither the odd eye nor the hairy pelt. In his personal appearance, dress dwelling, mode of occupation. and subsistence, he is so

different from almost every other tribe or nation of people, as to furnish ample matter for a monograph at once unique and amusing.

I shall not stay to inquire whence originated this odd specimen of humanity. Such speculations are more suited to those so-called *learned* ethnologists, who, resembling the anatomists in other branches of natural history, delight to deal in the mere pedantry of science, — who, from the mere coincidence of a few words, can prove that two peoples utterly unlike have sprung from a common source: precisely as Monsieur Cuvier, by the examination of a single tooth, has proved that a rabbit was a rhinoceros!

I shall not, therefore, waste time in this way, in hunting up the origin of the miserable Laplander; nor does it matter much where he sprang from. He either came from somewhere else, or was created in Lapland, — one of the two; and I defy all the philosophers in creation to say which: since there is no account extant of when he first arrived in that cold northern land, — not a word to contradict the idea of his having been there since the first creation of the human race. We find him there *now;* and that is all that we have to do with his origin at present. Were we to speculate, as to what races are kindred to him, and to which he bears the greatest resemblance, we should say that he was of either the same or similar origin with the Esquimaux of North America, the Greenlanders of Greenland, and the Samoeids, Tuski, and other tribes dwelling along the northern shores of Asia. Among all these nations of little men, there is a very great similarity, both in personal appearance and habits of life; but it would not be safe to say that they

all came from one common stock. The resemblances may be the result of a similarity in the circumstances, by which they are surrounded. As for language, — so much relied upon by the *scientific* ethnologist, — there could scarce be a more unreliable guide. The black negro of Carolina, the fair blue-eyed Saxon, and the red-skinned, red-polled Hibernian, all speak one language; the descendants of all three, thousands of years hence, will speak the same, — perhaps when they are widely scattered apart, — and the superficial philosopher of those future times will, no doubt, ascribe to them all one common origin!

Language, of itself, is no *proof* of the natural affinities of two peoples. It is evidence of their once having been in juxtaposition, — not much more. Of course when other points correspond, similarity of speech becomes a valuable corroboration. It is not our purpose, then, to inquire whence the Laplander came, — only *where* he is now, and *what* he is now. Where is he now?

If you take your map of Europe, and draw a line from the Gulf of Kandalax, in the White Sea, to the middle of the Loffoden Isles, on the Norwegian coast, you will cut off the country which is now properly called Lapland. The country at present inhabited by the people called Laplanders, will be found north of this line. It is a boundary more imaginary than real: for in truth there is no political division known as Lapland, nor has there been for hundreds of years. It is said there once was a kingdom of Lapland, and a nation of Laplanders; but there is no proof that either one or the other ever existed. There was a peculiar people, whom we now style Laplanders, scattered over the whole northern part of the

Scandinavian peninsula, and wandering as far south as the shores of the Gulf of Bothnia; but. that this people had ever any general compact, or union, deserving the name of government or nation, there is no proof. There is no evidence that they ever enjoyed a higher degree of civilization than they do at present; and that is not one iota higher than exists among the Esquimaux of North America, — notwithstanding the advantage which the Laplander has in the domestication of a ruminating quadruped and a knowledge of the Christian religion.

The tract of country which I have above assigned to the modern Laplander, is to be regarded rather as meaning that portion of Northern Europe, which can scarcely be said to be in the occupation of any other people. True Laplanders may be found dwelling, or rather wandering, much to the south of the line here indicated, — almost to the head of the Bothnian Gulf, — but in these southern districts, he no longer has the range clear to himself. The Finn — a creature of a very different kind — here meets him; constantly encroaching as a *colonist* on that territory which once belonged to the Laplander alone.

It becomes necessary to say a few words about the names we are using: since a perfect chaos of confusion has arisen among travellers and writers, in relation to the nomenclature of these two people, — the Finns and the Laplanders.

In the first place, then, there is in reality no such a people as Laplanders in Northern Europe. The word is a mere geographical invention, or "synonyme," if you wish. The people to whom we apply the name, call themselves "*Samlash;*" the Danes and Norwegians

term them "*Finns;*" and the Swedes and Russians style them "*Laps.*" The people whom *we* know as Finns — and who are not Laplanders in any sense — have received the appellation of Finns erroneously. These Finns have for a long period been making progress, as colonists, in the territory once occupied by the true Finns, or Laplanders; and have nothing in common with these last people. They are agriculturists, and dwell in fixed settlements; not pastoral and nomadic, as the Laplanders eminently are. Besides, there are many other essential points of difference between the two, — in mind, — in personal appearance, in habits, in almost everything. I am particular upon this point, — because the wrong application of the name *Finns*, to this last-mentioned race, has led writers into a world of error; and descriptions given of them and their habits have been applied to the people who are the subjects of the present chapter, — leading, of course, to the most erroneous conclusions. It would be like exhibiting the picture of a Caffre as the likeness of a Hottentot or Bushman!

The Finns, as geography now designates them, — and which also assigns to them a country called Finland, — are, therefore, not Finns at all. Where they are found in the old Lapland territory as colonists, they are called *Qüans;* and this name is given them alike by Russians, Swedes, Danes, and Norwegians.

To return to our Laplanders, who are the true Finns I have said that they are called by different names; by the Danes and Norwegians "Finns," and by the Russians and Swedes simply "Laps." No known meaning is attached to either name; nor can it be discovered at

what period either came into use. Enough to know that these are the designations by which they are now known to those four nations who have had chiefly to deal with them.

Since these people have received so many appellations, — and especially one that leads to much confusion, — perhaps it is better, for geography's sake, to accept the error: to leave the *new* Finns to their usurped title, and to give the old Finns that distinctive name by which they are best known to the world, viz. *Laplanders.* So long as it is remembered, that this is merely a geographical title, no harm can result from employing it; and should the word *Finns* occur hereafter, it is to be considered as meaning not the Finns of Norwegian Finmark, but the Qüans of Finland, on the Gulf of Bothnia.

I have spoken of the country of the Laplanders, as if they *had* a country. They have not. There is a territory in which they dwell; but it is not theirs. Long, long ago the lordship of the soil was taken from them; and divided between three powerful neighbors. Russia took her largest slice from the east; Sweden fell in for its southern part; and Norway claimed that northern and western portion, lying along the Atlantic and Arctic Oceans. This afterwards became the property of Denmark: when Norway herself ceased to be independent.

The country, therefore, which I have defined as Lapland, in modern times is so styled, merely because it is almost exclusively occupied by these people: it not being worth the while of their Danish, Swedish, or Russian masters to colonize it. All three, however,

claim their share of it, — have their regular boundary lines, — and each mulcts the miserable Laplander of an annual tribute, in the shape of a small poll-tax. Each, too, has *forced* his own peculiar views of Christianity on those within his borders, — the Russian has shaped the Lap into a Greek Christian; while, under Swedish influence, he is a disciple of Martin Luther. His faith, however, is not very rational, one way or the other; and, in out-of-the-way corners of his chaotic country, he still adheres to some of his old mythic customs of sorcery and witchcraft: in other words, he is a "pagan."

Before proceeding to describe the Laplander, either personally or intellectually, a word about the country in which he dwells. I have called it a *chaotic* land. It has been described as a "huge congeries of frightful rocks and stupendous mountains, with many pleasant valleys, watered by an infinite number of rivulets, that run into the rivers and lakes." Some of the lakes are of large extent, containing a countless number of islands; one alone — the Lake Enaro — having so many, that it has been said no Laplander has lived long enough to visit each particular island. There is a great variety in the surface of the land. In some parts of the country the eye rests only on peaks and ridges of bleak, barren mountains, — on summits covered with never-melting snow, — on bold, rocky cliffs or wooded slopes, where only the firs and birches can flourish. In other parts there are dusky forests of pines, intersected here and there by wide morasses or bogs. Elsewhere, are extensive tracts of treeless champaign, covered with the white reindeer-lichen, as if they were under a fall of snow!

During summer there are many green and beautiful

spots, where even the rose sheds its fragrance around, and many berry-bearing bushes blossom brightly; but the summer is of short duration, and in those parts where it is most attractive, the pest of gnats, mosquitoes, and gad-flies, renders the country uninhabitable to the Laplander. We shall see presently, that, in the summer months, he flees from such lowland scenes, as from a pestilence; and betakes himself and his herd to the bleak, barren mountains.

Having given this short sketch of the country inhabited by the Laplander, we proceed to a description of himself.

He is short, — not more than five feet five inches, average height, — squat and stoutish, — rarely corpulent, — though there is a difference in all these respects, between those who inhabit different parts of the country. The Laps of Norwegian Lapland are taller than those in the Russian and Swedish territory.

His features are small, his eyes elongated, or slit-like, as among the Mongolian tribes; his cheekbones prominent, — his mouth large and wide, and his chin sharply pointed. His hair is black, or sometimes brownish; though among some tribes settled along the coasts light hair is not uncommon. It is probable that this may have originated in some admixture of blood with Norwegian, Russian, and other fishermen who frequent these coasts.

The Laplander has little or no beard; and in this respect he resembles the Greenlander and Esquimaux. His body is ill made, bony and muscular, and stronger than would be expected from his pigmy stature. He is active, and capable of enduring extreme fatigue and

privation; though it is a mistake to suppose that he is the agile creature he has been represented, — this error arising no doubt from the surprising speed with which habit has enabled him to skate over the frozen snow; and which, to a person unused to it, would appear to prove an extraordinary degree of agility. The hands and feet are small, — another point in common with the Esquimaux. The Laplander's voice is far from being a manly one. On the contrary, it is of small compass, weak, and of a squeaking tone. The complexion of the Laplander is generally regarded as *dark*. Its natural hue is perhaps not much darker than that of the Norwegian. Certainly not darker than many Portuguese or Spaniards; but, as he is seen, he appears as swarth as an Indian. This, however, arises from the long and almost constant exposure to smoke: in the midst of which the miserable creature spends more than half of his time.

It may again be observed, that those dwelling on the sea-shore are of lighter complexion; but perhaps that is also due to a foreign admixture.

We have given a picture of the Laplander's person; now a word or two about his mind.

Both his intellectual and moral man are peculiar, — even more so than his physical, — differing essentially from that of all the other nationalities with which he is brought in contact. He is cold-hearted, selfish, and morose. To love he is almost a stranger; and when such a feeling does exist within his bosom, it is rather as a spark than a passion. His courtship and marriage are pure matters of business, — rarely having any other motive than self-interest. One woman will do for his

wife as well as another; and better, if she be richer by half a dozen reindeer!

Hospitality is a virtue equally unknown to him. He wishes to see no stranger; and even wonders why a stranger should stray into his wild, bleak country. He is ever suspicious of the traveller through his land; unless that traveller chance to come in the guise of a Russian or Norwegian merchant, to exchange strong brandy for his reindeer-skins, or the furs of the animals he may have trapped. In his dealings he exhibits a sufficient degree of cunning, — much more than might be expected from the low standard of his intellect; and he will take no paper-money or any kind of "scrip" in exchange. This caution, however, he has acquired from a terrible experience, which he once had in dealing with paper-money; and he is determined that the folly shall never again be repeated. Even in *his* out-of-the way corner of the globe, there was at one time a bank speculation of the "Anglo-Bengalee" character, of which the poor Lap was made an especial victim.

He has no courage whatever. He will not resist oppression. The stranger — Russ or Norwegian — may strike, kick, or cuff him, — he will not return the blow. Belike he will burst into tears!

And yet, under some circumstances, he shows a feeling akin to courage. He is cool in moments of danger from the elements, or when opposed to fierce animals, as the wolf or the bear. He is also capable of enduring fatigue to an extreme degree; and it is known historically that he was once warlike, — at least much more so than at present. *Now*, there is not a drop of warrior blood in his veins. On the contrary, he is timid and

pacific, and rarely quarrels. He carries constantly upon his person a long ugly knife, of Norwegian manufacture; but he has never been known to draw it, — never known to commit murder with it.

These are certainly virtues; but it is to be feared that with him they owe their origin to timidity and the dread of consequences. Now and then he has a quarrel with one of his fellows; but the knife is never used; and the "punishment" consists in giving and receiving various kicks, scratches, pullings of the hair and ears: genuine blows, however, are not attempted, and the long knife never leaves its sheath.

In the olden time he was a great believer in witches; in fact, noted for his faith in sorcery. Christianity, such as it is, has done much to eradicate this belief; but he is still troubled with a host of superstitions.

Of filial and parental affection his stock is but scanty. The son shifts for himself, as soon as he is able to do so; and but little anxiety is exhibited about him afterwards. The daughter goes to the highest bidder, — to him who is most liberal in presents of brandy to the parent. Jealousy is little known. How could it be felt, where there is no love?

One of the worst vices of the Laplander is his fondness for drink, — amounting almost to a passion. It is one of his costliest, too: since he often consumes the produce of his industry in its indulgence. His favorite beverage is strong, bad brandy, — a staple article kept by the traders, to exchange for the commodities which the country affords. As these men care little for the result, and have a far greater influence over the Laplander than either the government officials, or the lazy,

timeserving missionaries, it is not probable that temperance will ever be introduced among these wretched people. Fortunately, only the coast Laplanders are at all times subject to this influence. The mountain people or those who dwell most of their time in the interior, are too distant from the "tap" to be so grievously affected by it. It is only on their short annual visits to the merchant stations on the coast, that they fall extensively into the jaws of this degrading vice.

The dress of the Laplander is now to be described.

The men wear on their heads tall caps, of a conical form, usually of a cloth called *wadmal*, or some species of kersey furnished by the merchants. This cap has a tassel at top, and around the bottom is turned up several inches, — where it is strengthened by a band of reindeer-skin, or the fur of the otter. The coat is a loose garment or frock: made of the skin of the reindeer, with the hairy side out, and fastened around the waist with a broad leathern belt.

In this belt is stuck the pointed knife, and a pouch or two, for pipe, tobacco, and spoon, are also suspended from it. Breeches of reindeer-skin — the hide of the young fawns — reach to the ankles; and buskins, or rather stockings, of the same material cover the feet. These are gartered over the ends of the breeches, in such a way that no snow can get in; and since there is neither shirt nor drawers worn, we have given every article of a Laplander's dress. No. There are the gloves, or mittens, which must not be forgotten, — as they are one of the things most essential to his comfort. These are also the universal deer-hide.

Simple as is this dress of the Lapland men, it is not

more simple than that of the Lapland women, since both one and the other are exactly alike. A slight difference is observable in the shape of the bonnet; but for the rest, the lady wears the deer-skin frock, the breeches, and boots, — and like her liege lord, she scorns to include linen in her wardrobe. This plain dress, however, is the every-day *winter* costume. The summer one, and especially upon grand occasions, is somewhat different, and altogether gayer. The shape is much the same; but the tunic or frock is of cloth, sometimes plain, coarse *wadmal;* but in the case of the richer proprietors, of fine colored cloth, — even scarlet being sometimes worn. No matter what the quality of the cloth, however, the trimmings are always of rich, bright-colored stuffs; and consist of bands or cords around the skirt, sleeves, and collar, elaborately stitched by the females, — who are in all cases the tailors. The leathern belt, worn with this dress, is loaded with ornaments, — little square and triangular plates of brass or white metal, and often of heavy, solid silver. The belt is an esteemed article, — as much so as his wampum to a North-American savage, — and it requires a large sum to tempt a Laplander to part with the precious equipment. A finer cap is also worn, on these summer and holiday occasions. Not unfrequently, however, the Laplander — especially the mountain Lap — sticks to his deer-skin coat, the *paesk*, through all weathers, and throughout all seasons, — when it is too hot simply taking off the belt, and leaving the flaps loose and open. In cold weather, and especially when riding in his sledge, an additional garment is worn. This is a fur "tippet," which covers his shoulders down to the elbows. It is made from the shaggy skin of the

brown bear, — with the claws left on and hanging down in front of the breast.

Before proceeding to describe the mode of life and occupation of the Laplander, it is necessary to state that all of the people known as Laplanders, are not occupied alike. On the contrary, they may be separated into three distinct classes, according to the lives which they lead; and it is absolutely necessary to make this classification in the illustration of their habits. They are all alike in race and national characteristics, — all Laplanders, — and they differ but little in their style of dressing; but, in other respects, what might be said of one would not be true of the other two. I proceed, therefore, to point out the distinction.

The first to be noticed are those we have already mentioned under the title of "Coast," or "Shore Laplanders." The name will give an idea of their *habitat*, — as also their mode of life and subsistence. They dwell along the Norwegian coasts, round to the North Cape, and even beyond it. They build their *gammes*, or sod-thatched dwellings, in little villages around the numerous creeks and "fiords" that intersect this rock-bound shore.

Their calling is that of fishermen. They subsist almost entirely upon fish; and live by selling their surplus to the merchants and Russian traders. They keep a few sheep, sometimes a poor cow, but rarely own the reindeer. The life they lead is entirely different from that of their kindred, who dwell habitually in the interior. As it differs little from that of poor fishermen elsewhere, I shall dismiss the coast Laplander without another word.

The second kind of Lap who merits our consideration, is that known as the "Wood Laplander," or, more commonly, "Wood Lap." He is less known than either of the two other varieties; but, as already stated, he differs from them principally on account of his occupation. His home is to be found upon the extensive plain country of Russian Lapland, and not near the sea. He is a dweller in the pine and fir-forests; and builds him a rude hut, very similar to the gamme of the coast Lap; but he is in possession of some reindeer, — not enough, however, to support him, — and he ekes out a subsistence by fishing in the rivers and fresh-water lakes of the interior, by shooting the elk and wild reindeer, and trapping the fur-bearing animals, — the ermine, the sable, the miniver-squirrel, the badger, glutton, foxes, and wolves.

As his calling is chiefly that of a hunter and trapper, and therefore very similar to like occupations in many other parts of the world, we need not enter into details of it here. For the present, therefore, we must *shelve* the *Wood Lap* along with his kinsman of the coast.

This brings us to the third class, — the "Mountain," or, as he is often called, the "Reindeer Laplander:" since it is the possession of this animal that chiefly distinguishes him from the other two classes of his countrymen.

His mode of life is altogether different from either, — in fact, resembling theirs in but few particulars. True, he fishes a little, and occasionally does a bit of amateur hunting; but these are mere adjuncts or pastimes. His main support is his antlered flock: it would be more truthful to call it his *sole* support. By the reindeer he

lives, by the reindeer he *moves*, by the reindeer he has his being.

His life is purely pastoral; he is a nomade, — a wanderer. All the world knows this; but all the world does not know *why* he wanders. Writers have asserted that it was to seek new pasture for his flocks, — the old ground having been eaten bare. Nothing of the sort. He leaves the fertile plains, just as the willows are putting forth their succulent shoots, — just as the rich grass begins to spring fresh and green, — and betakes himself to the bleak sides of the mountains. That does not look like seeking for a better pasture. It has nothing to do with it.

Let us follow him, however, throughout his wanderings, — through the circuit of a single year, — and, perhaps, we shall find out the motive that inducts him into the roving habit.

First, then, to be a "Reindeer Laplander," he must be the owner of one hundred head of deer; fewer than that will be of no use. If he have only fifty, he must sell out, and betake himself to some settlement of Qüans or Norwegians, — there to give his service for hire, — or else turn Coast Laplander and fisherman, — a calling which he despises. This would be a sinking in the social scale; but, if he has been imprudent or unfortunate, and his flock has got reduced to fifty head, there is no help for it. If he have one hundred, however, he may manage with great economy to rub on; and keep up his character as a *free Reindeer Lap*. With three hundred he can live comfortably; better with five hundred; but a thousand would render him affluent. With fifteen hundred he would be a grandee, and two thou-

said would give him the rank of a millionaire! There are very few millionaires in Lapland, and not many grandees. Proprietors of even a thousand head are scarce; there are more whose herds number from three hundred to five hundred each.

And here, I may remark, that there is no government, — no tribal origanization. The owner of each herd is the head of a family; over them he is patriarch, but his power extends no further. It is not even great so far, if there chance to be grown-up unruly sons sharing the common tent.

I have used the word tent. That is the Reindeer Laplander's home, — winter and summer alike. Notwithstanding the severity of his clime, he builds no house; and even his tent is of the very rudest kind known among tenting tribes. It consists of some birch saplings set up in the snow, bent towards each other, and then covered over with a piece of coarse cloth, — the *wadmal*. This he prefers to a covering of skins; and obtains it from the Norwegian or Russ trader in exchange for the latter. The tent, when standing, is only six feet high, and not much more in diameter. In this circumscribed space his whole family, wife, daughters, sons, often a retainer or two, and about a dozen dogs find shelter from the piercing blast, — seated, or lying beside, or on top of one another, higgledy-piggledy, any way they can. There is room found besides for a large iron or brass cooking-pot, some dishes and bowls of birch, a rude stone furnace, and a fire in the middle of the floor. Above the fire, a rack forms a shelf for countless tough cheeses, pieces of reindeers' flesh, bowls of milk, bladders of deer's blood, and a multiplicity of like objects.

The spring is just opening; the frost has thawed from the trees, — for the winter home is in the midst of a forest, — the ground is bare of snow, and already smiling with a carpet of green, enamelled by many brilliant flowers. It is time, therefore, for the Reindeer Laplander to decamp from the spot, and seek some other scene less inviting to the eye. You will naturally inquire why he does this? and perhaps you will express some surprise at a man showing so little judgment as to take leave of the fertile plain, — just now promising to yield him a rich pasture for his herds, — and transport his whole stock to the cold declivity of a bleak mountain? Yes, it is natural this should astonish you, — not, however, when you have heard the explanation.

Were he to stay in that plain — in that wood where he has wintered — a month longer, he would run the risk of losing half of his precious herd: perhaps in one season find himself reduced to the necessity of becoming a *Coast Lap*. The reason is simple, — the great gad-fly (*Æstrus tarandi*), with numerous other tormentors, are about to spring forth from the morass; and, as soon as the hot sun has blown them into full strength and vitality, commence their work of desolation upon the deer. In a few short days or hours their eggs would be deposited in the skin, — even in the nostrils of the antlered creature, — there to germinate and produce disease and death. Indeed, the torment of biting gnats and other insects would of itself materially injure the health and condition of the animals; and if not driven to the mountains, they would "stampede," and go there of their own accord. It becomes a necessity, then, for the Reindeer Lap to remove his habitation; and,

having gathered a few necessary utensils, and packed them on his stoutest bucks, he is off to the mountains.

He does not take the whole of his *penates* along with him. That would be difficult, for the snow is now gone, and he cannot use his proper mode of travelling, — the sledge. This he leaves behind him ; as well as all other implements and articles of household use, which he can do without in his summer quarters. The cooking-pot, and a few bowls and dishes, go along with him, — also the tent-cloth, and some skins for bedding. The smaller articles are deposited in panniers of wicker, which are slung over the backs of a number of pack-deer ; and, if a balance be required, the infant Lap, in its little boat-like cradle, forms the adjusting medium.

The journey is often of immense length. There may be highlands near, but these are not to the Laplander's liking. Nothing will satisfy him but the bold mountain range that overlooks the sea, trending along the whole Norwegian coast: only on the declivities of this, or on one of the thousand elevated rocky isles that guard this extensive seaboard, does the Laplander believe that his deer will enjoy proper health. He has a belief, moreover, that at least once every year, the reindeer should drink sea-water to keep them in condition. Certain it is, that on reaching the sea, these animals rush eagerly into the water, and drink the briny fluid ; and yet ever after, during the same season, they refuse to taste it! It is the general opinion that the solitary draught thus taken has the effect of destroying such larvæ, as may have already formed in their skins.

This journey often costs the Laplander great fatigue and trouble. It is not uncommon for him to go two

hundred miles to the Norwegian coast; for although a habitual home may lie much nearer to the shores of the Bothnian gulf, it would not serve his purpose to take his flock there. The forest on that side grows to the water's edge; and the gadfly is as abundant there, as in the wooded districts of the interior.

On reaching his destination, the Laplander chooses his grazing-ground, sometimes on the mountains of the mainland; but he prefers one of the elevated islets so numerous along the shore. This insures him against all danger from the flies, and also saves him much trouble in herding his deer. The islet may be two miles from the main, or any other land. That does not signify. The reindeer can swim like ducks, and the herd is soon driven over. The wadmal tent is then pitched, and the work of the summer begins. This consists in milking, cheese-making, and looking after the young deer; and a little fishing adds to the keep of the family: for it is at this time that foreign support is most required. The season of summer is with the mountain Lap his season of scarcity! He does not dream of killing his deer at this season, — that would be sheer waste, — nor does he drink their milk, only in very little quantity. It goes to the making of cheese, and the owner of the herd contents himself with the whey. Butter is not made at all by the Reindeer Lap, though the Quäns and Norwegians make some. The Lap would have no use for it, — since he eats no bread, — and it would not keep so well, nor yet be so safe an article of merchandise as the cheese. The latter he regards as his staple article of profit. He sells it to the coast-merchant: receiving in exchange his favorite dram-stuff, and a few pieces of coarse cloth, or

utensils. The merchant is near at hand: for just for this very purpose are several small ports and settlements kept in existence along the otherwise desert shores of Norway. Deer-skins and dried fish, oils of the seal, furs and pelts of various kinds, have drawn these little settlements to the coast. Otherwise they would not be there.

When the heat of the summer is over, the reindeer Laplander commences his return to his winter abode, — back to the place whence he came. The gadflies are now gone, and he can drive his deer back with safety; and just as he travelled to the coast, he wends his way home again: for it is to be observed that he regards the winter residence as the real home, and the summer one only as a place of temporary sojourn. He does not look upon it, as we at such a season. To him it is no pleasant excursion: rather is it his period of toil and dearth, — his *tightest* time.

Once home again, he has nothing to do but erect his wadmal tent and look after his deer, — that now find food upon their favorite lichen. It is buried inches deep under the snow. They care not for that. They can soon uncover the pasture with their broad hoofs; and their keen scent never allows them to scrape up the snow without finding the lichen underneath. Upon it they thrive, and at this season are in the best condition for the knife.

The Laplander now also enjoys life. If rich, he has fresh venison every day; but even if only moderately well off, he "kills" two or three times a week. His mode of slaughtering is original. He sticks his long knife-blade into the throat of the animal, leaving it there

till the creature is dead! This precaution he takes to prevent waste. Were he to pull out the blade, the blood would flow and be lost. The knife acts as a stopper to the wound it has made. The blood is preserved and carefully put away, — the bladder being used as the vessel to contain it.

You must not imagine that the Reindeer Lap remains all the winter in one place; on the contrary, he moves repeatedly, always taking his tent and tent-utensils along with him. The tent is as easily set up as taken down. The ground in all sheltered places is, at this season, covered with snow. It is only necessary to shovel it off, clearing a circular space about the size of the ground-plan of the tent. The snow, thus removed, produces a sort of elevated ring or snow-dyke all round the bare spot; and into this the tent-poles are hammered. They are then bent inward, tied near the tops, and the *wadmal* being laid on as before, the tent is ready for use.

Fresh branches of evergreen pines, and other trees, are strewed over the floor; and on top of these are laid the deer-skins that serve for beds, chairs, tables, and blankets. These, with the iron cooking-pot, a large iron or brass pail to hold melted snow-water for drinking, and a few other utensils, are the only furniture of the dwelling. I have already stated that the fire is built in the centre of the tent, — on some large stones, forming a rudely-constructed hearth. A hole in the roof is intended for a chimney; but its draught is so bad, that the tent is almost always filled with a cloud of bitter smoke, — so thick as to render objects invisible. In this atmosphere no other European, excepting a Lap, could possibly exist; and travellers, passing through the Lap-

land country, have often preferred braving the cold frost of the night air, to being half smothered by the smoke: and have consequently taken shelter under a neighboring tree. The Laplander himself feels but little inconvenienced by the very thickest smoke.

Habit is everything, and to this habit has he been used from his infancy. His eyes, however, are not so indifferent to the annoyance. These suffer from it; and the consequence is that the eyes of the Laplanders are almost universally sore and watery. This is a notable characteristic of the race. Smoke, however, is not the sole cause of it. The Esquimaux equally suffer from sore eyes; and these, burning oil in their houses instead of wood, are seldom troubled with smoke. More likely it is the snow-glare to which the Laplander, as well as the Esquimaux, is much exposed, that brings about this copious *watering* of the eyes.

The Laplander cooks the reindeer flesh by boiling. A large piece is put into the great family pot, and nothing added but a quantity of water. In this the meat boils and simmers till it is done tender. The oily fat is then skimmed off, and put into a separate vessel; and the meat is "dished" in a large tray or bowl of birch-bark.

A piece is then cut off, for each individual of the family; and handed around the circle. It is eaten without bread, and even salt is dispensed with. A dip in the bowl of skim-fat is all the seasoning it gets; and it is washed down with the "liquor" in which it has been boiled, and which is nothing but greasy water, without vegetables or any other "lining." It has the flavor of the fat venison, however; and is by no means ill-tasted

The *angelica* flourishes in the country of the Laplander, and of this vegetable he makes occasional use, not eating the roots, but the stalks and leaves, usually raw and without any preparation. Perhaps he is led to use it, by a knowledge of the antiscorbutic properties of the plant.

Several species of berry-producing bushes also furnish him with an occasional meal of fruit. There are wild currants, the cranberry, whortle, and bilberries. The fruits of these trees do not fall in the autumn, as with us; but remain all winter upon the branches. Buried under the snow, they are preserved in perfect condition, until the thaw of the following spring once more brings them into view. At this time they are sweet and mellow; and are gathered in large quantities by the Lap women. Sometimes they are eaten, as they come from the tree; but it is more usual to make them into a "plum-pudding:" that is, they are mixed with a kind of curdled milk, and stored away in bladders. When wanted, a slice is cut from the mass, — including a piece of the bladder, within which they have now attained to the stiffness and consistence of a "cream-cheese."

Another great luxury of the Laplander, is the reindeer's milk frozen into an "ice." This is easily obtained; and the process consists simply in filling a birchen bowl with milk, and exposing it to the open air during frost. It is soon converted into solid ice; and in this condition will keep perfectly sweet throughout the whole of the winter. As the reindeer are never milked in the depth of the winter season, the Laplander takes care, before that period approaches, to lay in a stock of ice-milk: so that he may have a drink of it at

all times, by simply setting one of his birchen bowls within reach of the fire. He even makes a merchandise of this article: for the frozen reindeer milk is highly prized by the foreign merchants; who are ready, at any time, to exchange for the delicious article a dram of their devilish fire-water.

It is at this season that the Laplander moves about both on foot and in his sledge. He not only travels from place to place, in a circuit of twenty miles, — round the little solitary church which the Swedish missionary has built for him, — but he makes an occasional journey to the distant coast.

In his sledge, or even afoot, a hundred miles are to him as nothing: for the frozen snow enables him to perform such a distance in an incredibly short time. On his "skies," or snow-skates he could do a hundred miles in a couple of days; even though the paths led him over hills, mountains, lakes, and rivers. All are now alike, — all concealed under the common covering of a deep snow. The lakes and rivers are frozen and bridged for him; and the mountain declivities are rendered smooth and easily traversed, — either by the sledge or the "skies." With the former he would think little of a hundred miles in a single day; and if the occasion were a "killing" one, and relays could be had upon the route, twice that enormous distance he could easily accomplish.

The mode of sleigh-travelling by the Reindeer Laplander, as also his snow-skimming, or skating, have been both often and elaborately described. I have only space here to present the more salient points of the picture.

This sleigh or sledge is termed by him "pulka;" but he has three varieties of this article, — two for travel-

ling, and the third for carrying luggage. The two first kinds are nearly alike; and, in fact, differ only in a little extra "furniture," which one of them has upon it, — that is, a covering over the top, to keep more comfortable the feet and legs of the traveller. In other respects it is only the common pulk, being similar to the latter in shape, size, *atelage*, and everything.

To get an idea of the Laplander's sledge, you must fancy a little boat, about six feet long, and sixteen inches in breadth of beam. This is the width at the stern, where it is broadest; but from the stern it narrows all the way forward, until, on reaching the stem, it has tapered almost to a point. Its sides are exactly like those of a boat; and it rests upon a "keel" of about four inches breadth, which keel is the one and only "runner." A strong board boxes up the stern end, in front of which is the seat; and the board itself serves to support the back of the rider. His legs and feet are stretched out longitudinally; filling up the space between the quarter-deck and the "for'ard" part of the little craft; and, thus fixed, the Laplander is ready for the road.

In the best class of "pulk" — that used by the Russ and Swedish traders and travellers — the forward part is covered with a sort of half-deck of skins or leather; but the Laplander does not often fancy this. It gives him too much trouble to get out and in; as he is often compelled to do to look after his train of deer. His pulk, therefore, is open from stem to stern; and his deer-skin coverings keep his legs warm enough.

Only one deer is used; and the mode of harnessing is of primitive simplicity. A band of skin acts as a

collar round the neck of the animal; and from the lowest point of this a piece falls downwards below the animal's breast, — striking in on the counter like the pendants of a martingale. To this piece is attached the trace, — there is but one, — which, passing between the forelegs, and afterwards the hind ones, is looped into an iron ring upon the stem of the sledge. Upon this trace, which is a strong strap of raw hide or leather, the whole draught-power is exerted. A broad surcingle — usually of cloth, neatly stitched and ornamented — passes round the deer's body. Its use is to hold up the trace underneath the belly, and prevent it from dragging the ground, or getting among the animal's feet. A similar band of cloth passes round its neck, giving a fine appearance to the noble creature. A single rein attached to the left horn, or fixed halter-fashion around the deer's head, is all that is necessary to guide it along; the movements of this, aided by the accents of its master's voice, are understood by this well-trained animal.

For all that, the deer does not *always* travel kindly. Frequently he takes a fit of obstinacy or anger; and will then turn upon his trainer, — presenting his antlered front in an attitude of attack. On such occasions the Lap takes shelter behind his "pulk," raising it in his arms, and holding it as a shield wherewith to defend himself; until he can pacify, or otherwise subdue, the irritated buck.

The tumbling of the sledge, and consequent spilling of its load, is a thing of frequent occurrence, owing to the narrow base upon which the vehicle is supported but the Laplander thinks nothing of a trifling mishap

of this nature. In a trice the "snow-boat" is ghted, the voyager in his seat again, and off over the frozen snow with the speed of lightning.

The reindeer can travel nearly twenty English miles an hour! This rate of speed has been proved and tested; and with fresh relays along the route, over four hundred miles might be made in a day. But the same thing could be done with horses, — that is, upon a desperate emergency.

The luggage "pulk" of the Laplander differs only from the other kinds of sledges in being longer, broader, deeper, and consequently of more capacity to carry goods. It is used for transporting the skins and other merchantable commodities, from the interior to the trading depots on the coast.

The *skies* or snow-skates require very little description. They are on the same principle as the snow-shoes in use among the North-American Indians, though from these they differ materially in construction. They are merely two long pieces of smooth board, a few inches in breadth, and slightly turned up at the ends. One is full six feet, — the right one; the left is about twelve inches shorter. Near the middle they are lashed firmly to the feet by strong pieces of hide; and by means of these curious appendages, when the snow is crusted over, the Laplander can skim over its surface with great rapidity. He uses a long pole to guide and assist him in his movements; and this pole has a piece of circular board, or a round ball, near its point, — to prevent it from sinking too deeply in the snow. Going *up hill* upon the skies is not so easy; but the practised skater can ascend even the steep acclivities of the mountains

with less difficulty than might be imagined. This is accomplished in zigzag lines, — each leading to a higher elevation. Down hill, the course upon *skies* is rapid almost as the flight of an arrow; and, by means of the long pole, rocks, ravines, and precipices, are shunned with a dexterity that is quite surprising. Altogether a Laplander, either in his reindeer sledge, or upon his long wooden "skieg," is as interesting a sight as may be seen anywhere.

After all that has been said, it will appear pretty clearly, that the Laplander, though dwelling so very near to civilized lands, is still very far distant from ***true civilization.***

THE ANDAMANERS, OR MUD-BEDAUBERS.

On the eastern side of the Bay of Bengal lies a cluster, or archipelago, of islands known as the "Andamans." They form a long string running nearly northward and southward; and with the Nicobar group, still further to the south, they appear like a series of stepping-stones connecting Cape Negrais, in the Burmese country, with the island of Sumatra. Independent of the Nicobar Islands, the Andamans themselves have an extent of several hundred miles in length; while their breadth is nowhere over about twenty miles. Until of late the greater portion of the group was supposed to form only one island, — known as the "Great Andaman;" but, in the year 1792, this was discovered to have a channel across it that divided it into two distinct parts.

The discovery of this channel was accidental; and the accident was attended with melancholy consequences. A vessel from Madras had entered between the Great Andaman, and the opposite coast of Burmah. This vessel was laden with provisions, intended for the supply of Port Cornwallis, — a convict settlement, which the British had formed the preceding year on the east

ern side of the island. The master of the vessel, not knowing the position of Port Cornwallis, sent a boat to explore an opening which he saw in the land, — fancying that it might be the entrance to the harbor. It was not this, however; but the mouth of the channel above mentioned. The crew of the boat consisted of two Europeans and six Lascars. It was late in the afternoon when they stood into the entrance; and, as it soon fell dark upon them, they lost their way, and found themselves carried along by a rapid current that set towards the Bay of Bengal. The northeast monsoon was blowing at the time with great violence; and this, together with the rapid current, soon carried the boat through the channel; and, in spite of their efforts, they were driven out into the Indian Ocean, far beyond sight of land Here for eighteen days the unfortunate crew were buffeted about; until they were picked up by a French ship, almost under the equinoctial line, many hundreds of miles from the channel they had thus involuntarily discovered! The sad part of the story remains to be told. When relieved by the French vessel, the two Europeans and three of the Lascars were still living; the other three Lascars had disappeared. Shocking to relate, they had been killed and eaten by their companions!

The convict settlement above mentioned was carried on only for a few years, and then abandoned, — in consequence of the unhealthiness of the climate, by which the Sepoy guards of the establishment perished in great numbers.

Notwithstanding this, the Andaman Islands present a very attractive aspect. A ridge of mountains runs near-

ly throughout their whole extent, rising in some places to a height of between two and three thousand feet. These mountains are covered to their tops by dense forests, that might be called primeval, — since no trace of clearing or cultivation is to be found on the whole surface of the islands; nor has any ever existed within the memory of man, excepting that of the convict settlement referred to. Some of the forest trees are of great size and height; and numerous species are intermixed. Mangroves line the shores; and prickly ferns and wild rattans form an impenetrable brake on the sides of the hills; bamboos are also common, and the "gambier" or "cutch" tree (*Agathis*), from which is extracted the *Terra Japonica* of commerce. There are others that yield dyes, and a curious species of screw-pine (*pandanus*), — known as the "Nicobar breadfruit."

Notwithstanding their favorable situation, the zoölogy of these islands is extremely limited in species. The only quadrupeds known to exist upon them are wild hogs, dogs, and rats; and a variety of the monkey tribe inhabits the forests of the interior. The land-birds are few, — consisting of pigeons, doves, small parrots, and the Indian crow; while hawks are seen occasionally hovering over the trees; and a species of humming-bird flies about at night, uttering a soft cry that resembles the cooing of doves. There are owls of several species; and the cliffs that front the coast are frequented by a singular swallow, — the *hirundo esculenta*, whose nests are eaten by the wealthy mandarins of China. Along the shores there are gulls, kingfishers, and other aquatic birds. A large lizard of the *guana* species is common, with several others; and a green snake, of the most

venomous description, renders it dangerous to penetrate the jungle thickets that cover the whole surface of the country.

In all these matters there is not much that is remarkable, — if we accept the extreme paucity of the zoölogy; and this is really a peculiarity, — considering that the Andaman Islands lie within less than eighty leagues of the Burman territory, a country so rich in mammalia; considering, too, that they are covered with immense forests, almost impenetrable to human beings, on account of their thick intertwining of underwood and parasitical plants, — the very home, one would suppose for wild beasts of many kinds! And withal we find only three species of quadrupeds, and these small ones, thinly distributed along the skirts of the forest. In truth, the Andaman Islands and their *fauna* have long been a puzzle to the zoölogist.

But longer still, and to a far greater extent, have their human inhabitants perplexed the ethnologist; and here we arrive at the true peculiarity of the Andaman Islands, — that is to say, the *people* who inhabit them. With perhaps no exception, these people are the most truly savage of any on the face of the globe; and this has been their character from the earliest times: for they have been known to the ancients as far back as the time of Ptolemy. Ptolemy mentions them under the title of *anthropophagi* (man-eaters); and the Arabs of the ninth century, who navigated the Indian Ocean, have given a similar account of them. Marco Polo adopts this statement, and what is still more surprising, one of the most noted ethnologists of our own time — Dr. Latham — has given way to a like credulity, and puts the poor

Andamaners down as "pagan cannibals." It is an error they are not cannibals in any sense of the word; and if they have ever eaten human flesh, — of which there is no proof, — it has been when impelled by famine. Under like circumstances, some of every nation on earth have done the same, — Englishmen, Germans, Frenchmen, Americans, — of late years frequently, — in the mountains of New Mexico and California.

The charge of cannibalism against these miserable beings rests on no other foundation than the allegations of Chinese sailors, and the vague statements of Ptolemy and the Arabs above mentioned.

The Chinese have occasion now and then to visit the Andaman Islands in their junks, to collect the edible nests of the swallow (*hirundo esculenta*), — which birds have extensive breeding-places on the cliffs that over hang the coast of the Great Andaman. The "trepang," or sea-slug, is also found in large quantities upon the rocks near the shore; and this is equally an object of commerce, and esteemed an article of the greatest luxury, among the mandarins, and other rich celestials who can afford to indulge in it.

Now and then, a junk has been wrecked among these rocks; and its miserable crew have fallen a victim to the hostility of the natives: just as they might have done on more civilized coasts, where no cannibalism was ever suspected to exist. Crews of junks have been totally destroyed, — murdered, if you please, — but it would not be difficult to show, that this was done more from motives of revenge than from a mere sanguinary instinct or disposition; but there is no proof whatever of, even a single case, of true cannibalism. Indeed, there

are strong reasons for our disbelief in this horrid custom, — so far as regards the poor savages of the Andamans. An incident, that seems to give a flat contradiction to it, occurred during the occupancy of the island by the East-India Company in the year 1793; and other proofs of non-cannibalism have been obtained at a still more recent period, to which we shall presently allude.

The incident of 1793 was as follows: A party of fishers belonging to the settlement enticed an Andaman woman to come near, by holding out presents of food. The woman was made captive by these treacherous men; who, instead of relieving her hunger, proceeded to behave to her in the most brutal and unfeeling manner. The cries of the poor creature brought a numerous troop of her people to the spot; who, rushing out of the thickets from every side, collected around the fishermen; and, having attacked them with spears and arrows, succeeded in killing two of their number. The rest with difficulty escaped to the settlement; and, having obtained assistance, a large party set out to search for the bodies of their companions. There was but little expectation that these would be recovered: as all were under the belief that the savages must have carried them away for the purpose of making a cannibal feast upon them. There had been ample time for the removing of them: since the scene of the struggle was at a considerable distance from the fort.

The searchers, therefore, were somewhat astonished at finding both bodies on the spot where they had fallen, and the enemy entirely gone from the ground! The bodies were disfigured in the most shocking manner. The flesh was pierced in every part, — by spears, no

doubt, — and the bones had been pounded with heavy stones, until they were mashed into fragments; but not a bit of flesh was removed, not even an arm or limb had been severed!

The other instance to which we have promised to allude occurred at a much more recent period, — so late, in fact, as the period of the King of Delhi's imprisonment. It will be fresh in the memory of my readers, that his Hindoo majesty was carried to the island of Great Andaman, along with a number of "Sepoy" rebels, who had been taken prisoners during the late Indian revolt. The convict settlement was restored, especially for this purpose; and a detachment of "East-India Company's troops" was sent along with the rebel sepoys to guard them. It was supposed that the troops would have great difficulty in the performance of their duty: since the number of their prisoners was larger than could be fairly looked after; and, it was well known, that, if a prisoner could once get clear of the walls of the fort, it would be altogether idle to pursue him. The chase after a fugitive through the tangled forests of the Andamans would be emphatically a "wild-goose" chase; and there would be ten chances to one against his being recaptured.

Such, in reality, did it appear, for the first week or two, after the settlement was re-established. Numerous prisoners escaped into the woods, and as it was deemed idle to follow them, they were given up as "lost birds."

In the end, however, it proved that they were not all lost, — though some of them were. After a week or two had expired, they began to straggle back to the fort, and voluntarily deliver themselves up to their old guards

— now one, now another, or two or three at a time, — but all of them in the most forlorn and deplorable condition. They had enjoyed a little liberty on the Andaman isles; but a taste of it had proved sufficient to satisfy them that captivity in a well-rationed guard-house was ever preferable to freedom with a hungry stomach, added to the risk which they ran every hour of the day of being impaled upon the spears of the savages. Many of them actually met with this fate; and others only escaped half dead from the hostile treatment they had received at the hands of the islanders. There was no account, however, that any of them had been *eaten*, — no evidence that their implacable enemies were cannibals.

Such are a few arguments that seem to controvert the accusation of Ptolemy and the two Arab merchants, — in whose travels the statement is found, and afterwards copied by the famous Marco Polo. Probably the Arabs obtained their idea from Ptolemy, Marco Polo from the Arabs, and Dr. Latham from Marco Polo. Indeed, it is by no means certain that Ptolemy meant the Andaman Islands by his *Islæ bonæ Fortunæ*, or "Good-luck Isles," — certainly a most inappropriate appellation. He may have referred to Sumatra and its Battas, — who *are* cannibals beyond a doubt. And, after all, what could Ptolemy know about the matter except from vague report, or, more likely still, more vague *speculation*, — a process of reasoning practised in Ptolemy's time, just as at the present day. We are too ready to adopt the errors of the ancient writers, — as if men were more infallible then than they are now; and, on the other hand, we are equally prone to incredulity, — often rejecting their testimony when it would conduct to truth

I believe there is no historic testimony — ancient or modern — before us, to prove that the Andaman islanders are cannibals; and yet, with all the testimony to the contrary, there is one fact, or rather a hypothesis, which shall be presently adduced, that would point to the *probability* of their being so.

If they are not cannibals, however, they are not the less unmitigated *savages*, of the very lowest grade and degree. They are unacquainted with almost the very humblest arts of social life; and are not even so far advanced in the scale as to have an organization. In this respect they are upon a par with the Bushmen of Africa and the Diggers of North America: still more do they resemble the wretched starvelings of Tierra del Fuego. They have no tribal tie; but dwell in scattered groups or gangs, — just as monkeys or other animals of a gregarious nature.

In person, the Andaman is one of the very "ugliest" of known savages. He is of short stature, attaining to the height of only five feet; and his wife is a head shorter than himself. Both are as black as pitch, could their natural color be discovered; but the skin is usually hidden under a mask of rare material, which we shall presently have occasion to describe.

The upper half of the Andamaner's body is strongly and compactly built, and his arms are muscular enough. It is below, in the limbs, where he is most lacking in development. His legs are osseous and thin; and, only when he is in fine condition, is there the slightest swell on them that would indicate the presence of a calf. His feet are of monstrous length, and without any symmetry, — the heel projecting far backwards, in the fashion

usually styled "lark-heeled." It is just possible that a good deal of practice, by running over mud-banks and quicksands in search of his shell-fish subsistence, may have added to the natural development of his pedal extremities; for there can be no longer any doubt, that like effects have been produced by such causes, — effects that are indeed, after all, more *natural* than *artificial*.

The Andamaner exhibits the protuberance of belly noticed among other savages, who lead a starving life; and his countenance is usually marked with an expression that betrays a mixture of ferocity and famine.

It is worthy of remark, however, that though these stunted proportions are generally observable among the natives of the Andaman Islands, they do not appear to be universal. It is chiefly on the island of the Great Andaman that the most wretched of these savages are found. The Little Andaman seems to produce a better breed: since parties have been met with on this last-named island, in which many individuals were observed nearly six feet in height, and stout in proportion. One of these parties, and the incident of meeting with it, are thus described by an officer who was present: —

"We had not gone far, when, at an angle of the jungle, which covers the island to within a few yards of the water's edge, we came suddenly upon a party of the natives, lying upon their bellies behind the bushes, armed with spears, arrows, and long-bows, which they bent at us in a threatening manner Our Lascars, as soon as they saw them, fell back in great consternation, levelling their muskets and running into the sea towards the boats. It was with great difficulty we could prevent our cowardly rascals from firing; the tyndal was the

only one who stood by the chief mate and myself. We advanced within a few paces of the natives, and made signs of drinking, to intimate the purpose of our visit The tyndal salaamed to them, according to the different oriental modes of salutation, — he spoke to them in Malay, and other languages; but they returned no answer, and continued in their crouching attitude, pointing their weapons at us whenever we turned. I held out my handkerchief, but they would not come from behind the bushes to take it. I placed it upon the ground; and we returned, in order to allow them an opportunity of picking it up: still they would not move.

"I counted sixteen strong and able-bodied men opposite to us, many of them very lusty; and further on, six more. They were very different in appearance from what the natives of the Great Andaman are represented to be, — that is, of a puny race. The whole party was completely naked, with the exception of one, — a stout man nearly six feet in height, who was standing up along with two or three women in the rear. He wore on his head a red cloth with white spots.

"They were the most ferocious and wild-looking beings I ever beheld. Those parts of their bodies that were not besmeared with mud, were of a sooty black color. Their faces seemed to be painted with a red ochre."

Notwithstanding the difference in stature and other respects, — the result no doubt of a better condition of existence, — the inhabitants of both islands, Great and Little Andaman, are the same race of people; and in the portrait, the faces of both may be considered as one and the same. This brings us to the strangest fact in

the whole history of the Andaman islander. Instead of a Hindoo face, or a Chinese Mongolian face, or that of a Malay. — any of which we might reasonably expect to find in an aboriginal of the Bay of Bengal, — we trace in the Andaman islander the true physiognomy of a negro. Not only have we the flat nose and thick lips, but the curly hair, the sooty complexion, and all the other negro characteristics. And the most ill-favored variety at that; for, in addition to the ungraceful features already mentioned, we find a head large beyond all proportion, and a pair of small, red eyes deeply sunken in their sockets. Truly the Andaman islander has few pretensions to being a beauty!

Wretched, however, as the Andaman islander may appear, and of little importance as he certainly is in the great social family of the human race, he is, ethnologically speaking, one of its most interesting varieties. From the earliest times he has been a subject of speculation, or rather his presence in that particular part of the world where he is now found: for, since it is the general belief that he is entirely isolated from the two acknowledged negro races, and surrounded by other types of the human family, far different from either, the wonder is how he came to be there.

Perhaps no other two thousand people on earth — for that is about the number of Andaman islanders — have been honored with a greater amount of speculation in regard to their origin. Some ethnologists assign to them an African origin, and account for their presence upon the Andaman Islands by a singular story: that a Portuguese ship laden with African slaves, and proceeding to the Indian colonies, was wrecked in the Bay

of Bengal, and, of course, off the coast of the Andamans that the crew were murdered by the slaves; who, set free by this circumstance, became the inhabitants of the island. This story is supported by the argument, that the hostility which the natives now so notoriously exhibit, had its origin in a spirit of revenge: that still remembering the cruel treatment received on the "middle passage" at the hands of their Portuguese masters, they have resolved never to be enslaved again; but to retaliate upon the white man, whenever he may fall into their power!

Certainly the circumstances would seem to give some color to the tale, if it had any foundation; but it has none. Were we to credit it, it would be necessary to throw Ptolemy and the Arab merchants overboard, and Marco Polo to boot. All these have recorded the existence of the Andaman islanders, long before ever a Portuguese keel cleft the waters of the Indian Ocean, — ong even before Di Gama doubled the Cape!

But without either the aid of Ptolemy or the testimony of the Arabian explorers, it can be established that the Andaman Islands were inhabited before the era of the Portuguese in India; and by the same race of savages as now dwell upon them.

Another theory is: that it was an *Arabian* slave-ship that was wrecked, and not a Portuguese; and this would place the peopling of the islands at a much earlier period. There is no positive fact, however, to support this theory, — which, like the other, rests only on mere speculation.

The error of these hypotheses lies in their mistaken *data;* for, although we have stated that the Andaman

islanders are undoubtedly a negro race, they are not that negro race to which the speculation points, — in other words, they are not *African* negroes. Beyond certain marked features, as the flat nose and thick lips, they have nothing in common with these last. Their hair is more of the kind called "frizzly," than of the "woolly" texture of that of the Ethiopian negro; and in this respect they assimilate closely to the "Papuan," or New Guinea "negrillo," which every one knows is a very different being from the *African* negro.

Their moral characteristics — such as there has been an opportunity of observing among them — are also an additional proof that they are not of African origin; while these point unmistakably to a kinship with the other side of the Indian Ocean. Even some of their fashions, as we shall presently have occasion to notice, have a like tendency to confirm the belief that the Andaman is a "negrillo," and not a "negro." The only obstacle to this belief has hitherto been the fact of their isolated situation: since it is alleged — rather hastily as we shall see — that the whole of the opposite continent of the Burmese and other empires, is peopled by races entirely distinct: that none of the adjacent islands — the Nicobars and Sumatra — have any negro or negrillo inhabitants: and that the Andamaners are thus cut off, as it were, from any possible line of migration which they could have followed in entering the Bay of Bengal. Ethnologists, however, seem to have overlooked the circumstance that this allegation is not strictly true. The *Samangs* — a tribe inhabiting the mountainous parts of the Maylayan peninsula — are also a negro or negrillo race; a fact which at once establishes a link in the chain

of a supposed migration from the great Indian archipelago.

This lets the Andaman islander into the Great China Sea; or rather, coming from that sea, it forms the stepping-stone to his present residence in the Bay of Bengal. Who can say that he was not at one time the owner of the Maylayan peninsula? How can we account for the strange fact, that figures of Boodh — the Guadma of the Burmese and Siamese — are often seen in India beyond the Ganges, delineated with the curly hair and other characteristic features of the negro?

The theory that the Samang and Andaman islander once ruled the Malay peninsula; that they themselves came from eastward, — from the great islands of the Melanesian group, the centre and source of the negrillo race, — will in some measure account for this singular monumental testimony. The probability, moreover, is always in favor of a migration *westward within the tropics*. Beyond the tropics, the rule is sometimes reversed.

A coincidence of personal habit, between the Andaman islander and the Melanesian, is also observed. The former dyes his head of a brown or reddish color, — the very fashion of the Feegee!

Suppose, then, that the Samang and Andaman islander came down the trades, at a period too remote for even tradition to deal with it: suppose they occupied the Malay peninsula, no matter how long; and that at a much more recent period, they were pushed out of place, — the one returning to the Andaman Islands, the other to the mountains of the Quedah: suppose also that the party pushing them off were Malays, — who had them-

selves been drifted for hundreds of years down the trades from the far shores of America (for this is *our* "speculation"): suppose all these circumstances to have taken place, and you will be able to account for two facts that have for a long time puzzled the ethnologist. One is the presence of negroes on the islands of Andaman, — and the other of Malays in the southeastern corner of Asia. We might bring forward many arguments to uphold the probability of these hypotheses, had we space and time. Both, however, compel us to return to the more particular subject of our sketch; and we shall do so after having made a remark, promised above, and which relates to the *probability* of the Andaman islander being a cannibal. This, then, *would lie in the fact of his being a Papuan negro.* And yet, again, it is only a seeming; for it might be shown that with the Papuan cannibalism is not a natural instinct. It is only where he has reached a high degree of *civilization*, as in the case of the Feegee islander. Call the latter a monster if you will; but, as may be learnt from our account of him, he is anything but a *savage*, in the usual acceptation of the term. In fact, language has no epithet sufficiently vile to characterize such an anomalous animal as he.

I have endeavored to clear the Andaman islander of the charge of this guilt; and, since appearances are so much against him, he ought to feel grateful. It is doubtful whether he would, should this fall into his hands, and he be able to read it. The portrait of his face without that stain upon it, he might regard as ugly enough; and that of his habits, which now follows, is not much more flattering.

His house is little better than the den of a wild beast and far inferior in ingenuity of construction to those which beavers build. A few poles stuck in the ground are leant towards each other and tied together at the top. Over these a wattle of reeds and rattan-leaves forms the roof; and on the floor a "shake-down" of withered leaves makes his bed, or, perhaps it should rather be called his "lair." This, it will be perceived, is just the house built by Diggers, Bushmen, and Fuegians. There are no culinary utensils, — only a drinking-cup of the *nautilus* shell; but implements of war and the chase in plenty: for such are found even amongst the lowest of savages. They consist of bows, arrows, and a species of javelin or dart. The bows are very long, and made of the bamboo cane, — as are also the darts. The arrows are usually pointed with the tusks of the small wild hogs which inhabit the islands. These they occasionally capture in the chase, hanging up the skulls in their huts as trophies and ornaments. With strings of the hog's teeth also they sometimes ornament their bodies; but they are not very vain in this respect. Sometimes pieces of iron are found among them, — nails flattened to form the blades of knives, or to make an edge for their adzes, the heads of which are of hard wood. These pieces of iron they have no doubt obtained from wrecked vessels, or in the occasional intercourse which they have had with the convict establishment; but there is no regular commerce with them, — in fact, no commerce whatever, — as even the Malay traders, that go everywhere, do not visit the Andamaners, from dread of their well-known Ishmaelitish character. Some of the communities, more forward in civili-

zation, possess articles of more ingenious construction, — such as baskets to hold fruits and shell-fish, well-made bows, and arrows with several heads, for shooting fish. The only other article they possess of their own manufacture, is a rude kind of canoe, hollowed out of the trunk of a tree, by means of fire and their poor adze. A bamboo raft, of still ruder structure, enables them to cross the narrow bays and creeks by which their coast is indented.

Their habitual dwelling-place is upon the shore. They rarely penetrate the thick forests of the interior, where there is nothing to tempt them: for the wild hog, to which they sometimes give chase, is found only along the coasts where the forest is thinner and more straggling, or among the mangrove-bushes, — on the fruits of which these animals feed. Strange to say, the forest, though luxuriant in species, affords but few trees that bear edible fruits. The cocoa-palm — abundant in all other parts of the East-Indian territories, and even upon the Cocos Islands, that lie a little north of the Andamans — does not grow upon these mountain islands. Since the savages know nothing of cultivation, of course their dependence upon a vegetable diet would be exceedingly precarious. A few fruits and roots are eaten by them. The pandanus, above mentioned, bears a fine cone-shaped fruit, often weighing between thirty and forty pounds; and this, under the name of *mellori*, or "Nicobar bread-fruit," forms part of their food. But it requires a process of cooking, which, being quite unknown to the Andamaners, must make it to them a "bitter fruit" even when roasted in the ashes of their fires, which is their mode of preparing it. They eat

also the fruit of the mangrove, and of some other trees but these are not obtainable at all seasons, or in such quantity as to afford them a subsistence. They depend principally upon fish, which they broil in a primitive manner over a gridiron of bamboos, sometimes not waiting till they are half done. They especially subsist upon shell-fish, several kinds abounding on their coasts, which they obtain among the rocks after the tide has gone out. To gather these is the work of the women, while the men employ themselves in fishing or in the chase of the wild hog. The species of shell-fish most common are the *murex tribulus*, *trochus telescopium*, *cypræa caurica*, and muscles. They are dexterous in capturing other fish with their darts, which they strike down upon the finny prey, either from their rafts, or by wading up to their knees in the water. They also take fish by torchlight, — that is, by kindling dry grass, the blaze of which attracts certain species into the shallow water, where the fishers stand in wait for them.

When the fishery fails them, and the oysters and muscles become scarce, they are often driven to sad extremities, and will then eat anything that will sustain life, — lizards, insects, worms, — perhaps even *human flesh* They are not unfrequently in such straits; and instances are recorded, where they have been found lying upon the shore in the last stages of starvation.

An instance of this kind is related in connection with the convict settlement of 1793. A coasting-party one day discovered two Andamaners lying upon the beach. They were at first believed to be dead, but as it proved, they were only debilitated from hunger: being then in the very last stages of famine. They were an old man

and a boy; and having been carried at once to the fort, every means that humanity could suggest was used to recover them. With the boy this result was accomplished; but the old man could not be restored: his strength was too far gone; and he died, shortly after being brought to the settlement.

Two women or young girls were also found far gone with hunger; so far, that a piece of fish held out was sufficient to allure them into the presence of a boat's crew that had landed on the shore. They were taken on board the ship, and treated with the utmost humanity. In a short time they got rid of all fears of violence being offered them; but seemed, at the same time, to be sensible of modesty to a great degree. They had a small apartment allotted to them; and though they could hardly have had any real cause for apprehension, yet it was remarked that the two never went to sleep at the same time: one always kept watch while the other slept! When time made them more familiar with the good intentions towards them, they became exceedingly cheerful, chattered with freedom, and were amused above all things at the sight of their own persons in a mirror. They allowed clothes to be put on them; but took them off again, whenever they thought they were not watched, and threw them away as a useless encumbrance! They were fond of singing; sometimes in a melancholy recitative, and sometimes in a lively key; and they often gave exhibitions of dancing around the deck, in the fashion peculiar to the Andamans. They would not drink either wine or any spirituous liquor; but were immoderately fond of fish and sugar. They also ate rice when it was offered to them. They remained, or

rather were retained, several weeks on board the ship and had become so smooth and plump, under the liberal diet they indulged in, that they were scarce recognizable as the half-starved creatures that had been brought aboard so recently. It was evident, however, that they were not contented. Liberty, even with starvation allied to it, appeared sweeter to them than captivity in the midst of luxury and ease. The result proved that this sentiment was no stranger to them: for one night, when all but the watchman were asleep, they stole silently through the captain's cabin, jumped out of the stern windows into the sea, and swam to an island full half a mile distant from the ship! It was thought idle to pursue them; but, indeed, there was no intention of doing so. The object was to retain them by kindness, and try what effect might thus be produced on their wild companions, when they should return to them. Strange to say, this mode of dealing with the Andaman islanders has been made repeatedly, and always with the same fruitless result. Whatever may have been the original cause that interrupted their intercourse with the rest of mankind, they seem determined that this intercourse shall never be renewed.

When plenty reigns among them, and there has been a good take of fish, they act like other starved wretches and yield themselves up to feasting and gorging, till not a morsel remains. At such times they give way to excessive mirth, — dancing for hours together, and chattering all the while like as many apes.

They are extremely fond of "tripping it on the light fantastic toe;" and their dance is peculiar. It is carried on by the dancers forming a ring, and leaping about

each at intervals saluting his own posteriors with a slap from his foot, — a feat which both the men and women perform with great dexterity. Not unfrequently this mode of salutation is passed from one to the other, around the the whole ring, — causing unbounded merriment among the spectators.

Their fashion of dress is, perhaps, the most peculiar of all known costumes. As to clothing, they care nothing about it, — the females only wearing a sort of narrow fringe around the waist, — not from motives of modesty, but simply as an ornament; and in this scant garment we have a resemblance to the *liku* of the Feegeeans. It can hardly be said, however, that either men or women go entirely naked; for each morning, after rising from his couch of leaves, the Andamaner plasters the whole of his body with a thick coat of mud, which he wears throughout the day. Wherever this cracks from getting dry by the sun, the place is patched or mended up with a fresh layer. The black mop upon his head is not permitted to wear its natural hue; but, as already mentioned, is colored by means of a red ochreous earth, which is found in plenty upon the islands. This reddening of his poll is the only attempt which the Andamaner makes at personal adornment; for his livery of mud is assumed for a purpose of utility, — to protect his body from the numerous mosquitoes, and other biting insects, whose myraids infest the lowland coast upon which he dwells.

A startling peculiarity of these islanders is the unmitigated hostility which they exhibit, and have always exhibited, towards every people with whom they have come in contact. It is not the white man alone whom

they hate and harass; but they also murder the Malay, whose skin is almost as dark as their own. This would seem to contradict the hypothesis of a tradition of hostility preserved amongst them, and directed against white men who enslaved their ancestors; but, indeed, that story has been sufficiently refuted. A far more probable cause of their universal hatred is, that, at some period of their history, they have been grossly abused; so much so as to render suspicion and treachery almost an instinct of their nature.

In these very characteristic moral features we find another of those striking analogies that would seem to connect them with the negrillo races of the Eastern Archipelago; but, whether they are or are not connected with them, their appearance upon the Andamans is no greater mystery, than the solitary "fox-wolf" on the Falkland Islands, or the smallest wingless insect in some lone islet of the Ocean?

THE PATAGONIAN GIANTS.

Who has not heard of the *giants* of Patagonia? From the days of Magellan, when they were first seen, many a tale has been told, and many a speculation indulged in about these colossal men: some representing them as very Titans, of twelve feet in height, and stout in proportion: that, when standing a little astride, an ordinary-sized man could pass between their legs without even stooping his head! So talked the early navigators of the Great South Sea.

Since the time when these people were first seen by Europeans, up to the present hour, — in all, three hundred and thirty years ago, — it is astonishing how little has been added to our knowledge of them; the more so, that almost every voyager who has since passed through the Straits of Magellan, has had some intercourse with them; — the more so, that Spanish people have had settlements on the confines of their country; and one — an unsuccessful one, however — in the very heart of it! But these Spanish settlements have all decayed, or are fast decaying; and when the Spanish race disappears from America, — which sooner or later it will most certainly do, — it will leave behind it a greater

paucity of monumental record, than perhaps any civilized nation ever before transmitted to posterity.

Little, however, as we have learnt about the customs of the Patagonian people, we have at least obtained a more definite idea of their height. *They have been measured.* The twelve-feet giants can no longer be found they never existed, except in the fertile imaginations of some of the old *navigators*, — whose embodied testimony, nevertheless, it is difficult to disbelieve. Other and more reliable witnesses have done away with the Titans; but still we are unable to reduce the stature of the Patagonians to that of ordinary men. If not actual *giants*, they are, at all events, very tall men, — many of them standing seven feet in their boots of guanaco-leather, few less than six, and a like few rising nearly to eight! These measurements are definite and certain; and although the whole number of the Indians that inhabit the plains of Patagonia may not reach the above standard there are tribes of smaller men called by the common name Patagonians, — yet many individuals certainly exist who come up to it.

If not positive giants, then, it is safe enough to consider the Patagonians as among the "tallest" of human beings, — perhaps the very tallest that exist, or ever existed, upon the face of the earth; and for this reason, if for no other, they are entitled to be regarded as an "odd people." But they have other claims to this distinction; for their habits and customs, although in general corresponding to those of other tribes of American Indians, present us with many points that are peculiar

It may be remarked that the Patagonian women, although not so tall as their men, are in the usual propor

tion observable between the sexes. Many of them are more corpulent than the men; and if the latter be called *giants*, the former have every claim to the appellation of *giantesses!*

We have observed, elsewhere, the very remarkable difference between the two territories, lying respectively north and south of the Magellan Straits, — the Patagonian on the north, and the Fuegian on the south. No two lands could exhibit a greater contrast than these, — the former with its dry sterile treeless plains, — the latter almost entirely without plains; and, excepting a portion of its eastern end, without one level spot of an acre in breadth; but a grand chaos of humid forest-clad ravines and snow-covered mountains. Yet these two dissimilar regions are only separated by a narrow sea-channel, — deep, it is true; but so narrow, that a cannon-shot may be projected from one shore to the other. Not less dissimilar are the people who inhabit these opposite shores; and one might fancy a strange picture of contrast presented in the Straits of Magellan: on some projecting bluff on the northern shore, a stalwart Patagonian, eight feet in height, with his ample guanaco-skin floating from his shoulders, and his long spear towering ten feet above his head; — on the southern promontory, the dwarfed and shrivelled figure of a Fuegian, — scarce five feet tall, — with tiny bow and arrows in hand, and shivering under his patch of greasy sealskin! — and yet so near each other, that the stentorian voice of the giant may thunder in the ears of the dwarf; while the hen-like cackle of the latter may even reach those of his colossal *vis-à-vis!*

Notwithstanding this proximity, there is no converse

between them; for, unlike as are their persons, they are not more dissimilar than their thoughts, habits, and actions. The one is an aquatic animal, the other essentially terrestial; and, strange to say, in this peculiarity the weaker creature has the advantage: since the Fuegian can cross in his bark canoe to the territory of his gigantic neighbor, while the latter has no canoe nor water-craft of any kind, and therefore never thinks of extending his excursions to the "land of fire," excepting at one very narrow place where he has effected a crossing. In many other respects, more particularly detailed elsewhere, — in their natural dispositions and modes of life, these two peoples are equally dissimilar; and although learned craniologists may prove from their skulls, that both belong to one division of the human family, this fact proves also that craniology, like anatomy, is but a blind guide in the illustration of scientific truth, — whether the subject be the skull of a man or an animal Despite all the revelations of craniologic skill, an Indian of Patagonia bears about the same resemblance to an Indian of Tierra del Fuego, as may be found between a bull and a bluebottle!

Before proceeding to describe the modes of life practised by the Patagonian giants, a word or two about the country they inhabit.

It may be generally described as occupying the whole southern part of South America, — from the frontier of the Spanish settlements to the Straits of Magellan, — and bounded east and west by the two great oceans. Now, the most southern Spanish (Buenos Ayrean) settlement is at the mouth of Rio Negro; therefore, the Rio Negro — which is the largest river south of the

La Plata — may be taken as the northern boundary of Patagonia. Not that the weak, vitiated Spanish-American extends his sway from the Atlantic to the Andes: on the contrary, the Indian aborigines, under one name or another, are masters of the whole interior, — not only to the north of the Rio Negro, but to the very shores of the Caribbean Sea! Yes, the broad inland of South America, from Cape Horn to the sea of the Antilles, is now, as it always has been, the domain of the Red Indian; who, so far from having ever been reduced by conquest, has not only resisted the power of the Spanish sword, and the blandishments of the Spanish cross; but at this hour is encroaching, with constant and rapid strides, upon the blood-stained territory wrested from him by that *Christian conquest!*

And this is the man who is so rapidly to disappear from the face of the earth! If so, it is not the puny Spaniard who is destined to push him off. If he is to disappear, it will be at such a time, that no Spaniard will be living to witness his extermination.

Let us take Patagonia proper, then, as bordered upon the north by the Rio Negro, and extending from the Atlantic to the Pacific. In that case it is a country of eight hundred miles in length, with a breadth of at least two hundred, — a country larger than either France or Spain. Patagonia is usually described as a continuation of the great plains, known as the "Pampas," which extend from the La Plata River to the eastern slope of the Andes. This idea is altogether erroneous. It is true that Patagonia is a country of plains, — excepting that portion of it occupied by the Andes, which is, of course, a mountain tract, much of it resembling Tierra del Fuego

in character more than Patagonia. Indeed, Patagonia proper can hardly be regarded as including this mountain strip: since the Patagonian Indians only inhabit the plains properly so called. These plains differ essentially from those of the Pampas. The latter are based upon a calcareous formation: and produce a rank, rich herbage, — here of gigantic thistles and wild artichokes, — there of tall grasses; and, still nearer the mountains, they are thinly covered with copses of low trees. The plains of Patagonia on the other hand, are of tertiary formation, covered all over with a shingly pebble of porphyry and basalt, and almost destitute of vegetation. Here and there are some tufts of scanty grass with a few stunted bushes in the valleys of the streams, but nothing that can be called a tree. A surface drear and arid, in places mottled with "salinas" or salt-lakes; with fresh water only found at long intervals, and, when found, of scanty supply. There are many hilly tracts, but nothing that can be called mountains, — excepting the snow-covered Cordilleras in the west. The Patagonian plain is not everywhere of equal elevation: it rises by steps, as you follow it westward, beginning from the sea-level of the Atlantic shore; until, having reached the *piedmont* of the Andes, you still find yourself on a plain, but one which is elevated three thousand feet above the point from which you started. At all elevations, however, it presents the same sterile aspect; and you perceive that Patagonia is a true desert, — as much so as Atacama, in Peru, the desert of the Colorado in the north, the "barren grounds" of Hudson's Bay, the Sahara and Kalahari, Gobi, or the steppe of Kaurezm. To the South-African deserts it bears a more striking resemblance than to any

of the other — a resemblance heightened by the presence of that most remarkable of birds, — the ostrich. Two species stalk over the plains of Patagonia, — the *struthio rhea* and *struthio Darwinii*. The former extends northward over the Pampas, but not southward to the Straits of Magellan; the latter reaches the Straits, but is never seen upon the Pampas. The ranges of both meet and overlap near the middle of the Patagonian plain.

In addition to the ostrich, there are other large birds that frequent the steppes of Patagonia. The great condor here crosses the continent, and appears upon the Atlantic shores. He perches upon the cliffs of the sea, — as well as those that overhang the inland streams, — and builds his nest upon the bare rock. Two species of of *polyborus*, or vulture-eagles, — the "carrancha" and "chiniango," — fly side by side with the condor; and the black turkey-vultures are also denizens of this desert land. The red puma, too, has his home here; the fox of Azara; and several species of hawks and eagles.

With the exception of the first-mentioned — the ostrich — all these beasts and birds are predatory creatures; and require flesh for their subsistence. Where do they get it? Upon what do they all prey? Surely not upon the ostrich: since this bird is bigger than any of the birds of prey, and able to defend itself even against the great condor. There are only one or two other species of birds upon which the eagles might subsist, — a partridge and two kinds of plover; but the vultures could not get a living out of partridges and plovers. Small quadrupeds are alike scarce. There are only two or three species; and very small creatures they are, — one a sort of mole, "terutero," and several kinds

of mice. The latter are, indeed, numerous enough in some places, — swarming over the ground in tracts so sterile, that it is difficult to understand upon what they subsist. But vultures do not relish food, which they require to kill for themselves. They are too indolent for that; and wherever they are found, there must be some source of supply, — some large quadrupeds to provide them with their favorite food, — carrion. Otherwise, in this desert land, how should the ravenous puma maintain himself? — how the vultures and vulture-eagles? and, above all, upon what does the Patagonian himself subsist, — a man of such great bulk, as naturally to require more than the ordinary amount of food? The answer to all these questions, then, is, that a quadruped *does* exist in the deserts of Patagonia; which, if it furnish not all these creatures with their full diet supplies, does a large proportion of it. This quadruped is the *guanaco*.

Before proceeding to give an account of the guanaco, let us paint the portrait of the Patagonian himself.

As already observed, he is nearly seven feet in height, without any exaggeration in the way of a hat. He wears none, but suffers his long black hair to hang loosely over his shoulders, or, more frequently, gathers it into a knot or club upon the crown of his head. To keep it from straggling into his eyes, he usually wears a narrow strap of guanaco-skin around his forehead, or a plaited band of the hair of the same animal; but, although possessing ostrich-feathers at discretion, he rarely indulges in the fashion of wearing a plume, — he knows he is tall enough without one. Over his shoulders, and hanging nearly to his heels, he wears a loose mantle of guan-

aco-skins; which is of sufficient width to wrap round his body, and meet over his breast, — should he feel cold enough to require it. But he is not of a chilly nature; and he often throws this mantle entirely aside to give him the freedom of his arms; or more generally ties a girdle round it, and leaves the upper part to fall back from his shoulders, and hang down over the girdle. This mantle — with the exception of a small pouch-like apron in front — is the only "garment," the Patagonian wears upon his body; but his lower limbs have a covering of their own. These are encased in a sort of boots or moccasons, — but differing from all other boots and moccasons, in the fact of their being without *soles!* They are made of the same material as the mantle, — that is, of the skin of the *guanaco*, — but sometimes also of the skin of a horse's shank, — for the Patagonian, like the Pampas Indian, is in possession of this valuable animal.

This soleless boot covers the leg all round from below the knee, passing over the top of the foot like a gaiter; it extends also around the heel, and a little under it, but not so far as the instep, thus leaving the greater part of the sole bare, and the toes peeping out in front! They are, in reality, nothing more or less than gaiters, but gaiters of *guanaco*-skin, with the hair turned outward, and worn, not over a pair of boots or shoes, as gaiters usually are, but upon the naked shanks.

I have been thus particular in my description of the Patagonian *chaussure;* but you will understand my reasons, when I tell you that, from this trifling circumstance, not only has a vast territory of country, but the people who inhabit it, obtained the appellation by which

both have long been known to the civilized world, that is, *Patagonian.*

When the sailors who accompanied Magellan first saw these colossal men, they noticed a peculiar circumstance in relation to their feet. The flaps, or "uppers," of the gaiters, extending loosely across the tops of their feet, and exaggerated in breadth by the long hair that fringed out from their edges, gave to these Indians the appearance of having paws or "patas;" and the name *patagones*, or "duck-feet," was given them by the sailors, — ever prone to the bestowal of a ludicrous epithet. This name, in a slightly altered form, they have borne ever since, — so that Patagonia means the country of the *duck-footed* men.

The gaiters of the Patagonians have their peculiar purpose. They are not worn merely for the sake of keeping the legs warm, but also as a protection against the thorny shrubs which in Patagonia, as in all desert lands, are exceedingly abundant.

The mantle and moccasons, then, constitute the Patagonian's costume; and it does not differ so widely from that of his neighbor the Fuegian, — the chief points of difference being in the size and material.

Of course the guanaco-skin is much larger than that of the common seal; and a good Patagonian cloak would furnish "doublets" for a whole tribe of the diminutive Fuegians. Perhaps his ample garment has something to do in producing the exaggerated accounts that have been given of the stature of the Patagonians. Certain it is, that a man thus apparelled looks larger than he otherwise would do; and presents altogether a more imposing appearance. The Caffre, in his civet

cat "kaross," and the Pawnee Indian, in his robe of shaggy buffalo-hide, loom very large upon karroo and prairie, — much larger in appearance than they really are. It is but natural, therefore, to suppose that the Patagonian, attired in his guanaco mantle, and seen against the sky, standing upon the summit of a conspicuous cliff, would present a truly gigantic appearance.

When first seen in this position he was on foot. It was in the year 1520, — before the Spaniards had set foot upon South-American soil, — and of course before the horse became naturalized to that continent. In less than thirty years afterward, he appeared upon these same cliffs bestriding a steed: for this noble animal had extended his range over the plains of America, — even at an earlier period than his European owner. When the Spaniards, in their after-attempts at conquering the Indians of the Pampas and those of the northern prairies, entered upon these great plains, they encountered, to their great astonishment, their red enemies upon horseback, brandishing long lances, and managing fiery chargers with a skill equal to their own!

Among the earliest tribes that obtained possession of the horse, were those of the Pampas: since the first of these animals that ran wild on the plains of America were those landed in the La Plata expedition of Mendoza, — whence they became scattered over the adjacent pampas of Buenos Ayres.

From the banks of the La Plata, the horse passed rapidly southward to the Straits of Magellan; and from that hour the Patagonian walked no more. With the exception of a spur, — usually a sharp stick of wood,

upon his heel, — the only additional article of his "wear," the horse has made no change in his costume, nor in the fashion of his toilet. He still paints his face, as Magellan first saw it, — with a white ring encircling one eye, and a black or red one around the other; with one half of his body colored black, and a white sun delineated upon it, while the other half is white, forming the "ground" for a black moon! Scarce two individuals, however, wear the same escutcheon; for the fashion of having eyes, arms, and legs of two different colors — just as our ancestors used to wear their doublets and hose — is that followed by the Patagonians.

Notwithstanding this queer custom, — usually regarded as savage, — it would be unjust to call the Patagonian a *savage*. If we overlook the circumstance of his painting himself, — which, after all, is scarce more absurd than numberless practices of civilized life, — if we excuse him for too scantily covering the nakedness of his person, and relishing his food a little "underdone," we find little else, either in his habits or his moral nature that would entitle him to be termed a savage. On the contrary, from all the testimony that can be obtained, — in all the intercourse which white men have had with him, — there is scarce an act recorded, that would hinder his claim to being considered as civilized as they. Honorable and amiable, brave and generous, he has ever proved himself; and never has he exhibited those traits of vindictive ferocity supposed to be characteristic of the untutored man. He has not even harbored malice for the wrongs done him by the unprincipled adventurer Magellan: who, in his treatment of

these people, proved himself more of a savage than they. But the Patagonian restrained his vengeance; and apparently burying the outrage in oblivion, has ever since that time treated the white man with a generous and dignified friendship. Those who have been shipwrecked upon his solitary shores, have had no reason to complain of the treatment they have received at his hands. He is neither cannibal, nor yet barbarian, — but in truth a gentleman, — or, if you prefer it, a *gentleman savage.*

But how does this gentleman maintain himself? We have already seen that he is not a fisherman, — for he owns no species of boat; and without that his chances of capturing fish would be slight and uncertain. We have stated, moreover, that his country is a sterile desert; and so it is, — producing only the scantiest of herbage; neither plant, nor tree, that would furnish food; and incapable of being cultivated with any success. But he does not attempt cultivation, — he has no knowledge of it; nor is it likely he would feel the inclination, even if tempted by the most fertile soil. Neither is he pastoral in his habits: he has no flocks nor herds. The horse and dog are his only domestic animals; and these he requires for other purposes than food. The former enables him to pass easily over the wide tracts of his sterile land, and both assist him in the chase, -- which is his true and only calling. One of the chief objects of his pursuit is the ostrich; and he eats the flesh of this fine desert bird. He eats it, whenever he can procure it; but he could not live solely upon such food: since he could not obtain it in sufficient quantity; and were this bird the only means he had for

supplying his larder, he would soon be in danger of starvation. True, the ostrich lays a great many eggs, and brings forth a large brood of young; but there are a great many hungry mouths, and a great many large stomachs among the Patagonian people. The ostrich could never supply them all; and were it their only resource, the bird would soon disappear from the plains of Patagonia, and, perhaps, the race of Patagonian giants along with it.

Fortunately for the Patagonian, his country furnishes him with another kind of game, from which he obtains a more sufficient supply; and that is the guanaco. Behold yonder herd of stately creatures! There are several hundreds of them in all. Their bodies are covered with long, woolly hair of a reddish-brown color. If they had antlers upon their heads, you might mistake them for stags, — for they are just about the size of the male of the red deer. But they have no horns; and otherwise they are unlike these animals, — in their long slender necks, and coat of woolly hair. They are not deer of any kind, — they are *guanacos*. These, then, are the herds of the Patagonian Indian; they are the game he chiefly pursues; and their flesh the food, upon which he is mainly subsisted.

I need not here give the natural history of the guanaco. Suffice it to say that it is one of the four (perhaps five) species of *llamas* or "camel-sheep" peculiar to the continent of South America, — the other three of which are the *vicuña*, the true *llama*, and the *paco*, or *alpaca*. The llama and alpaca are domesticated; but the vicuña, the most graceful of all, exists only in a wild state, like the guanaco. The four kinds inhabit the

table-lands of the Andes, from Colombia to Chili; but the guanaco has extended its range across to the Atlantic side of the continent: this only in the territory south of the La Plata River. On the plains of Patagonia it is the characteristic quadruped: rarely out of sight, and usually seen in herds of twenty or thirty individuals; but sometimes in large droves, numbering as many as five hundred. There the puma — after the Indian of course — is its greatest enemy, — and the *débris* of *his* feast constitutes the food of the vultures and vulture-eagles, — thus accounting for the presence of these great birds in such a desert land.

The guanaco is among the shyest of quadrupeds; and its capture would be difficult to any one unacquainted with its habits. But these betray them to the skilled Patagonian hunter, — who is well acquainted with every fact in the natural history of the animal.

The Patagonian mode of capturing these creatures is not without many peculiarities in hunting practice. His first care is to find out their whereabouts: for the haunts which the guanacos most affect are not the level plains, where they might be seen from afar, but rather those places where the ground is hilly or rolling. There they are to be met with, ranged in extended lines along the sides of the hills, with an old male keeping watch upon the summit of some eminence that overlooks the flock. Should the sentinel espy any danger, or even suspect it, he gives the alarm by uttering a shrill, whistling cry, somewhat resembling a neigh. On hearing this well-known signal, the others at once take to flight, and gallop straight for the side of some other hill, — where they all halt in line, and stand waiting to see if they are

followed. Very often the first intimation which the hunter has of their presence, is by hearing their strange signal of flight, — which may be described as a sort of triangular cross between squealing, neighing, and whistling.

Shy as they are, and difficult to be approached, they have the strange peculiarity of losing all their senses when put into confusion. On these occasions they behave exactly like a flock of sheep: not knowing which way to run; now dashing to one side, then to the other, and often rushing into the very teeth of that danger from which they are trying to escape!

Knowing their stupidity in this respect, the Patagonian hunter acts accordingly. He does not go out to hunt the guanacos alone, but in company with others of his tribe, the hunting-party often comprising the whole tribe. Armed with their "chuzos," — light cane spears of eighteen feet in length, — and mounted on their well-trained steeds, they sally forth from their encampment, and proceed to the favorite pasturing-ground of the guanacos. Their purpose is, if possible, to effect the "surround" of a whole herd; and to accomplish this, it is necessary to proceed with great skill and caution. The animals are found at length; and, by means of a deployment of dogs and horsemen, are driven towards some hill which may be convenient to the pasture. The instinct of the animal guiding it thither, renders this part of the performance easy enough. On reaching the hill, the guanacos dash onward, up to its summit; and there, halting in a compact crowd, make front towards their pursuers. These meanwhile have galloped into a circle, — surrounding the eminence on

all sides; and, advancing upwards amidst loud yells and the yelping of their dogs, close finally around the herd, and rush forward to the attack.

The long chuzos do their work with rapidity; and, in a few minutes, numbers of the guanacos lie lifeless among the rocks. The dogs, with some men, form an outer circle of assailants; and should any guanacos escape through the line of horsemen, they are seized upon by the dogs, and pinned to the spot, — for it is another sheep-like trait in the character of this animal, that the moment a dog — even though he be the merest cur — seizes hold of it, it neither attempts further flight nor resistence, but remains "pinned" to the spot as if under a paralysis of terror. They sometimes give battle, however, though never to a dog; and their mode of assault is by kicking behind them, — not with their hoofs as horses do, but with the knee-joints, the hind legs being both raised at once. Among themselves the males fight terrible battles: biting each other with their teeth, and often inflicting cruel acerations.

Strange to say, when the guanacos are found solitary, or only two or three together, they are far less shy than when assembled in large herds. At such times, the feeling of curiosity seems stronger than that of fear within them; and the hunter can easily approach within a dozen paces of one, by simply cutting a few capers, or holding up something that may be new to it, — such as a strip of colored rag, or some showy article of any kind. It was by such devices that the Patagonian captured these creatures, before possession of the horse enabled him to effect their destruction in the more wholesale fashion of the "surround."

By tumbling about over the ground, he was enabled to bring the game within reach, — not of his bow and arrows; nor yet of his long spear, — for he did not use it for such a purpose, — and, of course, not of a gun, for he never had heard of such a weapon. Within reach of what then? Of a weapon peculiarly his own, — a weapon of singular construction and deadly effect; which he knew how to employ before ever the white man came upon his shores, and which the Spaniards who dwell in the Pampas country have found both pride and profit in adopting. This weapon is the "bolas."

It is simple and easily described. Two round stones, — the women make them round by grinding the one against the other, — two round stones are covered with a piece of guanaco raw hide, presenting very much the appearance of cricket-balls, though of unequal size, — one being considerably smaller than the other. Two thongs are cut; and one end of each is firmly attached to one of the balls.

The other ends of the thongs are knotted to each other; and when the strings are at full stretch, the balls will then be about eight feet apart, — in other words, each thong should be four feet in length. The bolas are now made, and ready for use. The chief difficulty in their manufacture lies in the rounding of the stones; which, as above observed, is the work of the women; and at least two days are required to grind a pair of bola-stones to the proper spherical shape. To handle them requires long practice; and this the Patagonian has had: for, ever since the young giant was able to stand upon his feet, he has been in the habit of playing with the bolas. They have been the toy of his child

hood; and to display skill in their management has been the pride of his boyish days; therefore, on arriving at full maturity, no wonder he exhibits great dexterity in their use. He can then project them to a distance of fifty yards, — with such precision as to strike the legs of either man or quadruped, and with such force, that the thong not only whips itself around the object struck, but often leaves a deep weal in the skin and flesh. The mode of throwing them is well known. The right hand only is used; and this grasps the thongs at their point of union, about halfway between the ends. The balls are then whirled in a circular motion around the head and, when sufficient centrifugal power has been obtained, the weapon is launched at the object to be captured. The aim is a matter of nice calculation, — in which arm, eye, and mind, all bear a part, — and so true is this aim, in Patagonian practice, that the hunter seldom fails to bring down or otherwise cripple his game, — be it ostrich, cavy, or guanaco.

By these bolas, then, did the Patagonian hunter capture the guanaco and ostrich in times past; and by the same weapon does he still capture them: for he can use it even better on horseback than on foot. Either the bird or the quadruped, within fifty yards, has no chance of escape from his unerring aim.

The bolas, in some districts, have been improved upon by the introduction of a third ball; but this the Patagonian does not consider an *improvement*. Wooden balls are sometimes employed; and iron ones, where they can be had, — the last sort can be projected to the greatest distance.

The Patagonian takes the young guanacos alive; and

brings them up in a state of domestication. The little creatures may often be observed, standing outside the tents of a Patagonian encampment, — either tied by a string, or held in hand by some "infant giant" of the tribe. It is not solely for the pleasure of making pets of them, that the young guanacos are thus cherished; nor yet to raise them for food. The object aimed at has a very different signification. These young guanacos are intended to be used as *decoys:* for the purpose of attracting their own relatives, — fathers, mothers, sisters, brothers, uncles, and aunts, even to the most distant thirty-second cousinship, — within reach of the terrible bolas!

This is effected by tying the innocent little creature to some bush, — behind which the hunter conceals himself, — and then imitating the mother's call; which the Indian hunter can do with all the skill of a ventriloquist. The young captive responds with the plaintive cry of captivity, — the parents are soon attracted to the spot, and fall victims to their instinct of natural affection. Were it not for this, and similar stratagems adopted by the Patagonian hunter, he would pursue the guanaco in vain. Even with the help of his pack of dogs, and mounted upon the fleet Spanish horse, the guanaco cannot be hunted with success. Nature, in denying to these animals almost every means of defence, has also bestowed upon them a gift which enables them to escape from many kinds of danger. Of mild and inoffensive habits, — defenceless as the hare, — they are also possessed of a like swiftness. Indeed, there is perhaps no quadruped — not even the antelope — can get over the ground as speedily as the guanaco or its kindred species the vicuña

Both are swift as the wind; and the eye, following either in its retreat over the level plain, or up the declivity of a hill, is deluded into the fancy that it is watching some great bird upon the wing.

There are certain seasons during which the guanaco is much more difficult to approach than at other times; but this is true of almost every species of animal, — whether bird or quadruped. Of course, the tame season is that of sexual intercourse, when even the wild beasts become reckless under the influence of passion. At other times the guanacos are generally very shy; and sometimes extremely so. It is not uncommon for a herd of them to take the alarm, and scamper off from the hunter, even before the latter has approached near enough to be himself within sight of them! They possess great keenness of scent, but it is the eye which usually proves their friend, warning them of the approach of an enemy — especially if that enemy be a man upon horseback — before the latter is aware of their proximity. Often a cloud of dust, rising afar off over the plain, is the only proof the hunter can obtain, that there was game within the range of his vision. It is a curious circumstance connected with hunting on these great plains, — both on the Pampas and in Patagonia, — that a man on foot can approach much nearer to any game than if he were mounted upon a horse. This is true not only in relation to the guanaco and ostrich, but also of the large Pampas deer (*cervus campestris*); and indeed of almost every animal that inhabits these regions. The reason is simple enough. All these creatures are accustomed to seeing their human enemy only on horseback: for "still hunting" or hunt

ing afoot, is rarely or never practised upon the plains Not only that, but a man on foot, would be a rare sight either to an ostrich or guanaco; and they would scarce recognize him as an enemy! Curiosity would be their leading sentiment; and, being influenced by this, the hunter *on foot* can often approach them without difficulty The Patagonian, knowing this peculiarity, not unfrequently takes advantage of it, to kill or capture both the bird and the quadruped.

This sentiment of the brute creation, on the plains of Patagonia, is directly the reverse of what may be observed in our own fields. The sly crow shows but little of this shyness, so long as you approach it on a horse's back; but only attempt to steal up to it on foot, — even with a thick hawthorn hedge to screen you, — and every fowler knows how wary the bird can prove itself. Some people pronounce this *instinct.* If so, instinct and reason must be one and the same thing.

Besides hunting the guanaco, much of the Patagonian's time is spent in the chase of the ostrich; and, to circumvent this shy creature, he adopts various *ruses.* The American ostrich, or more properly *rhea*, has many habits in common with its African congener. One of these is, when pursued it runs in a straight track, and, if possible, *against* the wind. Aware of this habit, the Patagonians pursue it on horseback, — taking the precaution to place some of their party in ambush in the direction which the bird is most likely to run. They then gallop hastily up to the line of flight, and either intercept the *rhea* altogether, or succeed in "hoppling" it with the bolas. The moment these touch its long legs,

both are drawn suddenly together; and the bird goes down as if shot!

Drake and other voyagers have recorded the statement that the Patagonians attract the rhea within reach, by disguising themselves in a skin of this bird. This is evidently an untruth; and the error, whether wilful or otherwise, derives its origin from the fact, that a stratagem of the kind is adopted by the Bushmen of Africa to deceive the ostrich. But what is practicable and possible between a pigmy Bushman and a gigantic African ostrich, becomes altogether impracticable and improbable, when the *dramatis personæ* are a gigantic Patagonian and an American *rhea*. Moreover, it is also worthy of remark, that the *rhea* of the Patagonian plains is not the larger of the two species of American ostrich, but the smaller one (*rhea Darwinii*), which has been lately specifically named after the celebrated naturalist. And justly does Mr. Darwin merit the honor: since he was the first to give a scientific description of the bird. He was not the first, however, — as he appears himself to believe, — to discover its existence, or to give a record of it in writing. The old Styrian monk, Dobrizhoffer, two centuries before Mr. Darwin was born, in his "History of the Abipones" clearly points to the fact that there were two distinct species of the "avestruz," or South-American ostrich.

Mr. Darwin, however, has confirmed Dobrizhoffer's account; and brought both birds home with him; and he, who chooses to reflect upon the subject, will easily perceive how impossible it would be for a Patagonian to conceal his bulky *corpus* under the skin of a *rhea Darwinii*, or even that of its larger congener, the *rhea*

Americana. The skin of either would be little more than large enough to form a cap for the *colossus* of the Patagonian plains.

In the more fertile parts of Patagonia, the large deer (*cervus campestris*) is found. These are also hunted by the Patagonian, and their flesh is esteemed excellent food; not, however, until it has lain several days buried underground, — for it requires this funereal process, to rid it of the rank, goat-like smell, so peculiar to the species. The mode of hunting this deer — at least that most likely to insure success — is by stealing forward to it on foot.

Sometimes a man may approach it, within the distance of a few yards, — even when there is no cover to shelter him, — by walking gently up to it. Of all the other quadrupeds of the Pampas, — and these plains are its favorite *habitat*, — the *cervus campestris* most dreads the horseman: — since its enemy always appears in that guise; and it has learnt the destructive power of both lazo and bolas, by having witnessed their effects upon its comrades. The hunter dismounted has no terrors for it; and if he will only keep lazo and bolas out of sight, — for these it can distinguish, as our crow does the gun, — he may get near enough to fling either one or the other with a fatal precision.

The "agouti" (*cavia Patagonica*) frequently furnishes the Patagonian with a meal. This species is a true denizen of the desert plains of Patagonia; and forms one of the characteristic features of their landscape. I need not describe its generic characters; and specifically it has been long known as the "Patagonian cavy." Its habits differ very little from the other South American

animals of this rodent genus, — except that, unlike the great capivare, it does not affect to dwell near the water. It is altogether a denizen of dry plains, in which it burrows, and upon which it may be seen browsing, or hopping at intervals from one point to another, like a gigantic rabbit or hare. In fact, the cavies appear to be the South American representatives of the hare family, — taking their place upon all occasions; and, though of many different species, — according to climate, soil, and other circumstances, — yet agreeing with the hares in most of their characteristic habits. So much do some of the species assimilate to these last, that colonial sportsmen are accustomed to give them the Old-World appellation of the celebrated swift-footed rodent. The Patagonian cavies are much larger than English hares, — one of them will weigh twenty-five pounds, — but, in other respects, there is a great deal of resemblance. On a fine evening, three or four cavies may be seen squatted near each other, or hopping about over the plains, one following the other in a direct line, as if they were all proceeding on the same errand! Just such a habit is frequently observed among hares and rabbits in a field of young corn or fallow.

The Patagonian boys and women often employ themselves in seeking out the ostriches' nests, and robbing them of their eggs, — which last they find good eating In the nests of the smaller species which we have already stated to be the most common in the Patagonian country, — they are not rewarded so liberally for their trouble. Only from sixteen to twenty eggs are hatched by the *rhea Darwinii* and about twenty-five to thirty by the *rhea Americana*. It will be seen, that this is far

below the number obtained from the nest of the African ostrich (*struthio camelus*), — in which as many as sixty or seventy eggs are frequently found. It would appear, therefore, that the greater the size of the bird, belonging to this genus the greater the number of its brood. Both the American rheas follow the peculiar habit of the true ostrich: that is, several hens deposit their eggs in the same nest; and the male bird assists in the process of incubation. Indeed, in almost every respect — except size and general color of plumage — the American and African ostriches resemble each other very closely; and there is no reason in the world why a pedantic compiler should have bestowed upon them distinct generic names Both are true *camel birds:* both alike the offspring, as they are the ornament, of the desert land.

Another occupation in which the Patagonian engages — and which sometimes rewards him with a meal — is the snaring of the Pampas partridge (*nothuria major*). This is usually the employment of the more youthful giants; and is performed both on foot and on horseback A small species of partridge is taken on foot; but the larger kind can be snared best from the back of a horse. The mode is not altogether peculiar to Patagonia: since it is also practised in other parts of America, — both north and south, — and the bustard is similarly captured upon the *karoos* of Africa. During the noon hours of the day, the performance takes place: that is, when the sun no longer casts a shadow. The locality of the bird being first ascertained, the fowler approaches it, as near as it will allow. He then commences riding round, and round, and round, — being all the while watched by the foolish bird, that, in constantly turning its head, appears

to grow giddy, and loses all dread of danger. The Indian each moment keeps lessening his circle; or, in other words, approaches by a spiral line, continually closing upon its centre. His only weapon is a long light reed, — something like the common kind of cane fishing-rod seen in the hands of rustic youth in our own country. On the end of this reed he has adjusted a stiff snare; the noose of which is made from the epidermis of an ostrich plume, or a piece of the split quill; and which, being both stiff and elastic, serves admirably for the purpose for which it is designed.

Having at length arrived within a proper distance to reach the beguiled bird, the boy softly stops his horse, bends gently sideward, and, adroitly passing his noose over the neck of the partridge, jerks the silly creature into the air. In this way an Indian boy will capture a dozen of these birds in a few hours; and might obtain far more, if the sun would only stay all day in the zenith. But as the bright orb sinks westward, the elongated shadow of the horseman passes over the partidge before the latter is within reach of the snare; and this alarming the creature, causes it to take flight.

The Patagonian builds no house; nor does he remain long in one place at a time. The sterile soil upon which he dwells requires him to lead a nomade life; passing from place to place in search of game A tent is therefore his home; and this is of the simplest kind: the tent-cloth consisting of a number of guanaco skins stitched together, and the poles being such as he can obtain from the nearest tract of thicket or *chapparal*. The poles are set bow-fashion in the ground, and over these the skin covering is spread, — one of the bent poles being left un

covered, to serve as a doorway. Most of the Patagonian's time is occupied in procuring game: which, as we have seen, is his sole sustenance; and when he has any leisure moments, they are given to the care of his horse, or to the making or repairing his weapons for the chase. Above all, the bolas are his especial pride, and ever present with him. When not in actual use, they are suspended from his girdle, or tied sash-like around his waist, — the balls dangling down like a pair of tassels.

Only during his hours of sleep, is this national weapon ever out of the hands of the Patagonian giant. Had the wonderful giant of our nurseries been provided with such a sling, it is probable that little Jack would have found in him an adversary more difficult to subdue!

THE FUEGIAN DWARFS.

The great continent of South America, tapering like a tongue to the southward, ends abruptly on the Straits of Magellan. These straits may be regarded as a sort of natural canal, connecting the Atlantic with the Pacific Ocean, winding between high rocky shores, and indented with numerous bays and inlets. Though the water is of great depth, the Straits themselves are so narrow that a ship passing through need never lose sight of land on either side; and in many places a shell, projected from an ordinary howitzer, would pitch clear across them from shore to shore! The country extending northward from these straits is, as already seen, called *Patagonia;* that which lies on their southern side is the famed "land of fire," *Tierra del Fuego.*

The canal, or channel, of the Straits of Magellan does not run in a direct line from the Atlantic to the Pacific. On the contrary, a ship entering from the former, instead of passing due west, must first run in a southwest direction, — rather more south than west. This course will continue, until the ship is about half way between the two oceans. She will then head almost at a right angle to her former course; and keep

this direction — which is nearly due northwest — until she emerges into the Pacific.

It will thus be seen, that the Straits form an angle near their middle; and the point of land which projects into the vertex of this angle, and known to navigators as Cape Forward, is the most southern land of the American *continent*. Of course this is not meant to apply to the most southern point of American land, — since Tierra del Fuego must be considered as part of South America. The far-famed "Cape Horn" is the part of America nearest to the South Pole; and this is a promontory on one of the small elevated islands lying off the southern coast of Tierra del Fuego itself. Tierra del Fuego was for a long time regarded as a single island; though, even in the voyage of Magellan, several large inlets, that resembled channels, were observed running into the land; and it was suspected by that navigator, that these inlets might be passages leading through to the ocean. Later surveys have proved that the conjectures of the Spano-Portuguese voyager were well founded; and it is now known that instead of a single island, the country called Tierra del Fuego is a congeries of many islands, of different shapes and sizes, — separated from one another by deep and narrow channels, or arms of the sea, with an endless ramification of sounds and inlets. In the western part — and occupying more than three fourths of their whole territory — these close-lying islands are nothing else than mountains, — several of them rising five thousand feet above the level of the water, and stepping directly down to it, without any foot-hills intervening! Some of them have their lower declivities covered with sombre forests

while, farther up, nothing appears but the bare brown rocks, varied with blue glaciers, or mottled with masses of snow. The more elevated peaks are covered with snow that never melts; since their summits rise considerably above the snow-line of this cold region.

These mountain-islands of Tierra del Fuego continue on to Cape Horn, and eastward to the Straits of Le Maire, and the bleak islet of Staaten Land. They may, in fact, be considered as the continuation of the great chain of the Andes, if we regard the intersecting channels — including that of Magellan itself — as mere clefts or ravines, the bottoms of which, lying below the level of the sea, have been filled with sea-water. Indeed, we may rationally take this view of the case: since these channels bear a very great resemblance to the stupendous ravines termed "barrancas" and "quebradas," which intersect the Cordilleras of the Andes in other parts of South America, — as also in the northern division of the American continent.

Regarding the Straits of Magellan, then, and the other channels of Tierra del Fuego, as great *water-barrancas*, we may consider the Andes as terminating at Cape Horn itself, or rather at Staaten Land: since that island is a still more distant extension of this, the longest chain of mountains on the globe.

Another point may be here adduced, in proof of the rationality of this theory. The western, or mountainous part of Tierra del Fuego bears a strong resemblance to the western section of the continent, — that is, the part occupied by the Andes. For a considerable distance to the north of the Magellan Straits, nearly one half of the continental land is of a mountainous character. It

is also indented by numerous sounds and inlets, resembling those of Tierra del Fuego; while the mountains that hang over these deep-water ravines are either timbered, or bare of trees and snow-covered, exhibiting glacier valleys, like those farther south. The whole physical character is similar; and, what is a still more singular fact, we find that in the western, or mountainous part of Patagonia, there are no true Patagonians; but that there the water-Indians, or Fuegians, frequent the creeks and inlets.

Again, upon the east, — or rather northeast of Tierra del Fuego, — that angular division of it, which lies to the north of the Sabastian channel presents us with physical features that correspond more nearly with those of the plains of Patagonia; and upon this part we find tribes of Indians that beyond doubt are true Patagonians, — and not Fuegians, as they have been described. This will account for the fact that some navigators have seen people on the Fuegian side that were large-bodied men, clothed in guanaco skins, and exhibiting none of those wretched traits which characterize the Fuegians; while, on the other hand, miserable, stunted men are known to occupy the mountainous western part of Patagonia. It amounts to this, — that the Patagonians *have* crossed the Straits of Magellan; and it is this people, and not Fuegians, who are usually seen upon the champaign lands north of the Sebastian channel. Even the guanaco has crossed at the same place, — for this quadruped, as well as a species of deer, is found in the eastern division of Tierra del Fuego. Perhaps it was the camel-sheep — which appears to be almost a necessity of the Patagonian's existence — that first induced these water-hating

giants to make so extensive a voyage as that of crossing the Straits at Cape Orange!

At Cape Orange the channel is so narrow, one might fancy that the Patagonians, if they possessed one half the pedestrian stretch attributed to the giants of old, might have stepped from shore to shore without wetting their great feet!

Perhaps there are no two people on earth, living so near each other as the Patagonians and Fuegians, who are more unlike. Except in the color of the skin and hair, there is hardly a point of resemblance between them. The former seems to hate the sea: at all events he never goes out upon, nor even approaches its shore, except in pursuit of such game as may wander that way. He neither dwells near, nor does he draw any portion of his subsistence from the waters of the great deep, — fish constituting no part of his food.

All this is directly the reverse with the Fuegian. The beach is the situation *he* chooses for his dwelling-place, and the sea or its shore is his proper element. He is more than half his time, either on it, or *in* it, — on it in his canoe, and in it, while wading among the tidal shoals in search of fish, muscles, and limpets, which constitute very nearly the whole of his subsistence.

It is very curious, therefore, while noting the difference between these two tribes of Indians, to observe how each confines its range to that part of the Magellanic land that appears best adapted to their own peculiar habits, — those of the Patagonian being altogether *terrestrial*, while those of the Fuegian are essentially *aquatic*.

We have stated elsewhere the limits of the Patago-

nian territory; and shown that, ethnologically speaking they do not occupy the whole northern shore of the Magellan Straits, but only the eastern half of it. Westward towards the Pacific the aspect of the land, on both sides of this famous channel, may be regarded as of the same character, though altogether different from that which is seen at the entrance, or eastern end.

West of Cape Negro on one side, and the Sebastian passage on the other, bleak mountain summits, with narrow wooded valleys intervening, become the characteristic features. There we behold an incongruous labyrinth of peaks and ridges, of singular and fantastic forms, — many of them reaching above the limits of perpetual snow, — which, in this cold climate descends to the height of four thousand feet. We have seen that these mountains are separated from each other, — not by plains, nor even valleys, in the ordinary understanding of the term; but by *ravines*, the steep sides of which are covered with sombre forests up to a height of one thousand five hundred feet above the level of the sea: at which point vegetation terminates with a uniformity as exact as that of the snow-line itself! These forests grow out of a wet, peaty soil, — in many places impassable on account of its boggy nature; and of this character is almost the whole surface of the different islands. The trees composing the forests are few in species, — those of the greatest size and numbers being the "winter's bark" (*drymys*), of the order *magnoliacæ*, a birch, and, more abundantly, a species of beech-tree, the *fagus betuloides*. These last-named trees are many of them of great size; and might almost be called evergreens: since they retain part of their foliage throughout the

whole year; but it would be more appropriate to style them *ever-yellows:* since at no period do they exhibit a verdure, anything like the forests of other countries. They are always clad in the same sombre livery of dull yellow, rendering the mountain landscape around them, if possible, more dreary and desolate.

The forests of Tierra del Fuego are essentially worthless forests; their timber offering but a limited contribution to the necessities of man, and producing scarce any food for his subsistence.

Many of the ravines are so deep as to end, as already stated, in becoming arms or inlets of the sea; while others again are filled up with stupendous glaciers, that appear like cataracts suddenly arrested in their fall, by being frozen into solid ice! Most of these inlets are of great depth, — so deep that the largest ship may plough through them with safety. They intersect the islands in every direction, — cutting them up into numerous peninsulas of the most fantastic forms; while some of the channels are narrow *sounds*, and stretch across the land of Tierra del Fuego from ocean to ocean.

The "Land of Fire" is therefore not an island, — as it was long regarded, — but rather a collection of islands, terminated by precipitous cliffs that frown within gunshot of each other. Ofttimes vast masses of rock, or still larger masses of glacier ice, fall from these cliffs into the profound abysses of the inlets below; the concussion, as they strike the water, reverberating to the distance of miles; while the water itself, stirred to its lowest depths, rises in grand surging waves, that often engulf the canoe of the unwary savage.

"Tierra del Fuego" is simply the Spanish phrase for

"Land of Fire." It was so called by Magellan on account of the numerous fires seen at night upon its shores, — while he and his people were passing through the Straits. These were signal fires, kindled by the natives, — no doubt to telegraph to one another the arrival of those strange leviathans, the Spanish ships, then seen by them for the first time.

The name is inappropriate. A more fit appellation would be the "land of water;" for, certainly, in no part of the earth is water more abundant: both rain and snow supplying it almost continually. Water is the very plague of the island; it lies stagnant or runs everywhere, — forming swamps, wherever there is a spot of level ground, and rendering even the declivities of the mountains as spongy as a peat-bog.

The climate throughout the whole year is excessively cold; for, though the winter is perhaps not more rigorous than in the same latitude of a northern land, yet the summer is almost as severe as the winter; and it would be a misnomer to call it summer at all. Snow falls throughout the whole year; and even in the midsummer of Tierra del Fuego men have actually perished from cold, at no great elevation above the level of the sea!

Under these circumstances, it would scarce be expected that Tierra del Fuego should be inhabited, — either by men or animals of any kind; but no country has yet been reached, too cold for the existence of both. No part of the earth seems to have been created in vain; and both men and beasts are found dwelling under the chill skies of Tierra del Fuego.

The land-animals, as well as the birds, are few in

species, as in numbers. The *guanaco* is found upon the islands; but whether indigenous, or carried across from the Patagonian shore, can never be determined: since it was an inhabitant of the islands long anterior to the arrival of Magellan. It frequents only the eastern side of the cluster, — where the ground is firmer, and a few level spots appear that might be termed plains or meadows. A species of deer inhabits the same districts; and besides these, there are two kinds of fox-wolves (*canis Megellanicus* and *canis Azaræ*), three or four kinds of mice, and a species of bat.

Of water-*mammalia* there is a greater abundance: these comprising the whale, seals, sea-lions, and the sea-otter.

But few birds have been observed; only the white-tufted flycatcher, a large black woodpecker with scarlet crest, a creeper, a wren, a thrush, a starling, hawks, owls, and four or five kinds of finches.

The water-birds, like the water-*mammalia*, muster in greater numbers. Of these there are ducks of various kinds, sea-divers, and penguins, the albatross, and sheer-water, and, more beautiful than all, the "painted" or "Magellan goose."

Reptiles do not exist, and insects are exceedingly rare. A few flies and butterflies are seen; but the mosquito — the plague of other parts of South America — does not venture into the cold, humid atmosphere of the Land of Fire.

We now arrive at the *human* inhabitants of this desolate region.

As might be expected, these exhibit no very high condition of either physical or mental development, but

the contrary. The character of their civilization is in complete correspondence with that of their dreary dwelling-place, — at the very bottom of the scale. Yes, at the very bottom, according to most ethnologists; even lower down than that of the Digger-Indian, the Andaman islander, the Bushman of Africa, or the Esquimaux of the Arctic Ocean: in fact, any comparison of a Fuegian with the last-mentioned would be ridiculous, as regards either their moral or physical condition. Below the Esquimaux, the Fuegian certainly is, and by many a long degrée.

In height, the tallest Fuegian stands about five feet, — not in his boots, for he wears none; but on his naked soles. His wife is just six inches shorter than himself, — a difference which is not a bad proportion between the sexes, but in other respects they are much alike. Both have small, misshapen limbs, with large knee-caps, and but little calf; both have long masses of coarse tangled hair, hanging like bunches of black snakes over their shoulders; and both are as naked as the hour in which they were born, — unless we call *that* a dress, — that bit of stinking seal-skin which is slung at the back, and covers about a fifth part of the whole body! Hairy side turned inward, it extends only from the nape of the neck to a few inches below the hollow of the back; and is fastened in front by means of a thong or skewer passing over the breast. It is rarely so ample as to admit of being "skewered;" and with this scanty covering, in rain and snow, frost and blow, — some one of which is continuously going on, — the shivering wretch is contented. Nay, more; if there should happen an interval of mild weather, or the wearer be at work in paddling

his canoe, he flings this unique garment aside, as if its warmth were an incumbrance! When the weather is particularly cold, he shifts the seal-skin to that side of his body which may chance to be exposed to the blast!

The Fuegian wears neither hat, nor shirt, waistcoat, nor breeches, — no shoes, no stockings, — nothing intended for clothing but the bit of stinking skin. His vanity, however, is exhibited, if not in his dress, to some extent in his adornments. Like all savages and many civilized people, he *paints* certain portions of his person; and his "escutcheon" is peculiar. It would be difficult detail its complicated labyrinth of "crossings" and "quarterings." We shall content ourselves by stating that black lines and blotches upon a white ground constitute its chief characteristic. Red, too, is sometimes seen, of a dark or "bricky" color. The black is simply charcoal; while the white-ground coat is obtained from a species of infusorial clay, which he finds at the bottom of the peaty streams, that pour down the ravines of the mountains. As additional ornaments, he wears strings of fish-teeth, or pieces of bone, about his wrists and ankles. His wife carries the same upon her neck; and both, when they can procure it, tie a plain band around the head, of a reddish-brown color, — the material of which is the long hair of the guanaco. The "cloak," already described, is sometimes of sea-otter instead of seal-skin; and on some of the islands, where the deer dwells, the hide of that animal affords a more ample covering. In most cases, however, the size of the garment is that of a pocket handkerchief; and affords about as much protection against the weather as a kerchief would.

Though the Fuegian has abundance of hair upon his head, there is none, or almost none on any part of his body. He is beardless and whiskerless as an Esquimaux; though his features, — without the adornment of hair, — are sufficiently fierce in their expression.

He not only looks ferocious, but in reality is so, — deformed in mind, as he is hideous in person. He is not only ungrateful for kindness done, but unwilling to remember it; and he is cruel and vindictive in the extreme. Beyond a doubt he is a *cannibal;* not habitually perhaps, but in times of scarcity and famine, — a true cannibal, for he does not confine himself to eating his *enemies*, but his *friends*, if need be, — and especially the old women of his tribe, who fall the first victims, in those crises produced by the terrible requirements of an impending starvation. Unfortunately the fact is too well authenticated to admit of either doubt or denial; and, even while we write, the account of a massacre of a ship's crew by these hostile savages is going the rounds of the press, — that ship, too, a missionary vessel, that had landed on their shores with the humane object of ameliorating their condition.

Of course such unnatural food is only partaken of at long and rare intervals, — by many communities never, — and there is no proof that the wretched Fuegian has acquired an appetite for it: like the Feegee and some other savage tribes. It is to be hoped that he indulges in the horrid habit, only when forced to it by the necessities of extreme hunger.

His ordinary subsistence is shell-fish; though he eats also the flesh of the seal and sea-otter; of birds, especially the penguin and Magellanic goose, when he can

capture them. His stomach will not "turn" at the blubber of a whale, — when by good chance one of these leviathans gets stranded on his coast, — even though the great carcass be far gone in the stages of decomposition! The only vegetable diet in which he indulges is the berry of a shrub — a species of arbutus — which grows abundantly on the peaty soil; and a fungus of a very curious kind, that is produced upon the trunks of the beech-tree. This fungus is of a globular form, and pale-yellow color. When young, it is elastic and turgid, with a smooth surface; but as it matures it becomes shrunken, grows tougher in its texture, and presents the pitted appearance of a honeycomb. When fully ripe, the Fuegians collect it in large quantities, eating it without cooking or other preparation. It is tough between the teeth; but soon changes into pulp, with a sweetish taste and flavor, — somewhat resembling that of our common mushroom.

These two vegetables — a berry and a cryptogamic plant — are almost the only ones eaten by the natives of Tierra del Fuego. There are others upon the island that might enable them to eke out their miserable existence: there are two especially sought after by such Europeans as visit this dreary land, — the "wild celery" (*apium antarcticum*), and the "scurvy grass" (*cardamine antiscorbutica*); but for these the Fuegian cares not. He even knows not their uses.

In speaking of other "odd people," I have usually described the mode of building their house; but about the house of the Fuegian I have almost "no story to tell." It would be idle to call that a house, which far more resembles the lair of a wild beast; and is, in re-

ality, little better than the den made by the orang outang in the forests of Borneo. Such as it is, however I shall describe it.

Having procured a number of long saplings or branches, — not always straight ones, — the Fuegian sharpens them at one end by means of his muscle-shell knife; and then sticking the sharpened ends into the ground in a kind of circle, he brings the tops all together, and ties them in a bunch, — so as to form a rude hemispherical frame. Upon this he lays some smaller branches; and over these a few armfuls of long coarse grass, and the house is "built." One side — that to leeward of the prevailing wind — is left open, to allow for an entrance and the escape of smoke. As this opening is usually about an eighth part of the whole circumference, the house is, in reality, nothing more than a shed or lair. Its furniture does not contradict the idea; but, on the contrary, only strengthens the comparison. There is no table, no chair, no bedstead: a "shake-down" of damp grass answers for all. There are no implements or utensils, — if we except a rude basket used for holding the arbutus berries, and a seal-skin bag, in which the shell-fish are collected. A bladder, filled with water, hangs upon some forking stuck against the side: in the top of this bladder is a hole, from which each member of the family takes a "suck," when thirst inclines them to drink!

The "tools" observable are a bow and arrow, the latter headed with flint; a fish spear with a forked point, made from a bone of the sea-lion; a short stick, — a woman's implement for knocking the limpets from the rocks; and some knives, the blades of which are sharp-

ened shells of the muscle, — a very large species of which is found along the coast. These knives are simply manufactured. The brittle edge of the shell — which is five or six inches in length — is first chipped off, and a new edge formed by grinding the shell upon the rocks. When thus prepared, it will cut not only the hardest wood, but even the bones of fish; and serves the Fuegian for all purposes.

Outside the hut, you may see the canoe, — near at hand too, — for the shieling of the Fuegian universally stands upon the beach. He never dwells in the interior of his island; and but rarely roams there, — the women only making such excursions as are necessary to procure the berry and the mushroom. The woods have no charms for him, except to afford him a little fuel; they are difficult to be traversed on account of the miry soil out of which the trees grow; and, otherwise, there is absolutely nothing to be found amidst their gloomy depths, that would in any way contribute to his comfort or sustenance. He is therefore essentially a dweller on the shore; and even there he is not free to come and go as he might choose. From the bold character of his coast, there are here and there long reaches, where the beach cannot be followed by land, — places where the water's edge can only be reached, and the shell-fish collected, by means of some sort of navigable craft. For this purpose the Fuegian requires a canoe; and the necessity of his life makes him a waterman. His skill, however, both in the construction of his craft, and the management of it, is of a very inferior order, — infinitely inferior to that exhibited either by the Esquimaux or the Water-Indians of the North.

His canoe is usually made of the bark of a tree, — the birch already mentioned. Sometimes it is so rudely shaped, as to be merely a large piece of bark shelled from a single trunk, closed at each end, and tied tightly with thong of seal-skin. A few cross-sticks prevent the sides from pressing inward; while as many stays of thong keep them from "bulging" in the contrary direction. If there are cracks in the bark, these are calked with rushes and a species of resin, which the woods furnish.

With this rude vessel the Fuegian ventures forth, upon the numerous straits and inlets that intersect his land; but he rarely trusts himself to a tempestuous sea.

If rich or industrious, he sometimes becomes the possessor of a craft superior to this. It is also a bark canoe, but not made of a single "flitch." On the contrary, there are many choice pieces used in its construction: for it is fifteen feet in length and three in width amidships. Its "build" also is better, — with a high prow and stern, and cross-pieces regularly set and secured at the ends. The pieces of bark are united by a stitching of thongs; and the seams carefully calked, so that no water can enter. In this vessel, the Fuegian may embark with his whole family, — and his whole furniture to boot, — and voyage to any part of his coast. And this in reality he does; for the "shanty" above described, is to him only a temporary home. The necessities of his life require him to be continually changing it; and a "removal," with the building of a new domicile, is a circumstance of frequent recurrence.

Not unfrequently, in removing from one part of the coast to another, he finds it safer making a land journey, to avoid the dangers of the deep. In times of high wind, it is necessary for him to adopt this course, — else his frail bark might be dashed against the rocks and riven to pieces. In the land-journey he carries the canoe along with him; and in order to do this with convenience, he has so contrived it, that the planks composing the little vessel can be taken apart, and put together again without much difficulty, — the seams only requiring to be freshly calked. In the transport across land, each member of the family carries a part of the canoe: the stronger individuals taking the heavier pieces, — as the side and bottom planks, — while the ribs and light beams are borne by the younger and weaker.

The necessity of removal arises from a very natural cause. A few days spent at a particular place, — on a creek or bay, — even though the community be a small one, soon exhausts the chief store of food, — the muscle-bank upon the beach, — and, of course, another must be sought for. This may lie at some distance; perhaps can only be reached by a tedious, and sometimes perilous water-journey; and under these circumstances the Fuegian deems it less trouble to carry the mountain to Mahomet, than carry Mahomet so often to the mountain. The transporting his whole *ménage*, is just as easy as bringing home a load of limpets; and as to the building of a new house, that is a mere bagatelle, which takes little labor, and no more time than the erection of a tent. Some Fuegians actually possess a tent, covered with the skins of animals; but this is a rare and excep

tional advantage; and the tent itself of the rudest kind The Fuegian has his own mode of procuring fire. He is provided with a piece of "mundic," or iron pyrites, which he finds high up upon the sides of his mountains. This struck by a pebble will produce sparks. These he catches upon a tinder of moss, or the "punk" of a dead tree, which he knows how to prepare. The tinder once ignited, is placed within a roundish ball of dry grass; and, this being waved about in circles, sets the grass in a blaze. It is then only necessary to communicate the flame to a bundle of sticks; and the work is complete. The process, though easy enough in a climate where "punk" is plenty, and dry grass and sticks can be readily procured, is nevertheless difficult enough in the humid atmosphere of Tierra del Fuego, — where moss is like a wet sponge, and grass, sticks, and logs, can hardly be found dry enough to burn. Well knowing this, the Fuegian is habitually careful of his fire: scarce ever permitting it to go out; and even while travelling in his canoe, in search of a "new home," side by side with his other "penates" he carries the fire along with him.

Notwithstanding the abundance of fuel with which his country provides him, he seems never to be thoroughly warm. Having no close walls to surround him, and no clothing to cover his body, he suffers almost incessantly from cold. Wherever met, he presents himself with a shivering aspect, like one undergoing a severe fit of the ague!

The Fuegians live in small communities, which scarce deserve the name of "tribes:" since they have no political leader, nor chief of any description The con

juror — and they have him — is the only individual that differs in any degree from the other members of the community; but his power is very slight and limited; nor does it extend to the exercise of any physical force. Religion they have none, — at least, none more sacred or sanctified than a vague belief in devils and other evil spirits.

Although without leaders, they are far from being a peaceful people. The various communities often quarrel and wage cruel and vindictive war against one another; and were it not that the boundaries of each association are well defined, by deep ravines and inlets of the sea, as well as by the impassable barriers of snow-covered mountains, these warlike dwarfs would thin one another's numbers to a far greater extent than they now do, — perhaps to a mutual extermination. Fortunately the peculiar nature of their country hinders them from coming very often within fighting distance.

Their whole system of life is abject in the extreme. Although provided with fires, their food is eaten raw; and a fish taken from the water will be swallowed upon the instant, — almost before the life is gone out of it. Seal and penguin flesh are devoured in the same manner; and the blubber of the whale is also a raw repast. When one of these is found dead upon the beach, — for they have neither the skill nor courage to capture the whale, — the lucky accident brings a season of rejoicing A fleet of canoes — if it is to be reached only by water — at once paddle towards the place; or, if it be an overland journey, the whole community — man, woman, and child — start forth on foot. In an hour or two they may be seen returning to their hut-village, each with a

large "flitch" of blubber flapping over the shoulders, and the head just appearing above, through a hole cut in the centre of the piece, — just as a Mexican ranchero wears his "serape," or a denizen of the Pampas his woollen "poncho." A feast follows this singular procession.

Like the Esquimaux of the north, the Fuegian is very skilful in capturing the seal. His mode of capturing this creature, however, is very different from that employed by the "sealer" of the Arctic Seas; and consists simply in stealing as near as possible in his canoe, when he sees the animal asleep upon the surface, and striking it with a javelin, — which he throws with an unerring aim.

We have already observed that the principal subsistence of the Fuegian is supplied by the sea; and shell-fish forms the most important item of his food. These are muscles, limpets, oysters, and other kinds of shell-fish, and so many are annually consumed by a single family, that an immense heap of the shells may be seen not only in front of every hut, but all along the coast of the islands, above high-water mark, — wherever a tribe has made its temporary sojourn.

There is a singular fact connected with these conglomerations of shells, which appears to have escaped the observations of the Magellanic voyagers. It is not by mere accident they are thus collected in piles. There is a certain amount of superstition in the matter. The Fuegian believes that, were the shells scattered negligently about, ill-luck would follow; and, above all, if the emptied ones were thrown back into the sea: since this would be a warning of destruction that would fright-

on the living bivalves in their "beds," and drive them away from the coast! Hence it is that the shell-heaps are so carefully kept together.

In collecting these shell-fish, the women are the chief laborers. They do not always gather them from the rocks, after the tide has gone out; though that is the usual time. But there are some species not found in shallow water, and therefore only to be obtained by diving to the bottom after them. Of this kind is a species of *echinus*, or "sea-urchin," of the shape of an orange, and about twice the bulk of one, — the whole outside surface being thickly set with spines, or protuberances. These curious shell-fish are called "sea-eggs by the sailor navigators; and constitute an important article of the food of the Fuegian. It is often necessary to dive for them to a great depth; and this is done by the Fuegian women, who are as expert in plunging as the pearl-divers of California or the Indian seas.

Fish is another article of Fuegian diet; and many kinds are captured upon their coasts, some of excellent quality. They sometimes obtain the fish by shooting them with their arrows, or striking them with a dart; but they have a mode of catching the finny creatures, which is altogether peculiar: that is to say, *hunting them with dogs!* The Fuegians possess a breed of small fox-like dogs, mean, wretched looking curs, usually on the very verge of starvation, — since their owners take not the slightest care of them, and hardly ever trouble themselves about feeding them. Nothwithstanding this neglect, the Fuegian dogs are not without certain good qualities; and become important auxiliaries

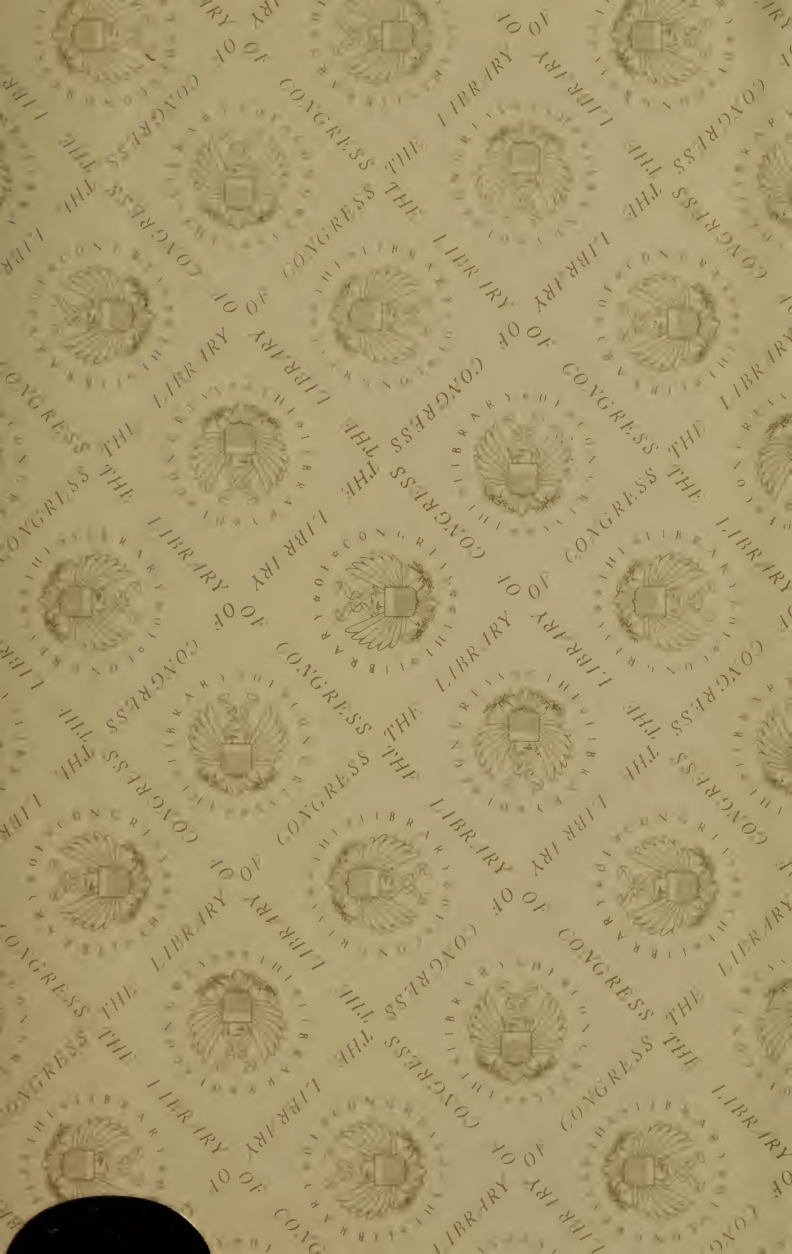
to the Fuegian fisherman. They are trained to pursue the fish through the water, and drive them into a net, or some enclosed creek or inlet, shallow enough for them to be shot with the arrow. In doing this the dogs dive to the bottom; and follow the fish to and fro, as if they were amphibious carnivora, like the seals and otters. For this useful service the poor brutes receive a very inadequate reward, — getting only the bones as their portion. They would undoubtedly starve, were it not that, being left to shift for themselves, they have learnt how to procure their own food; and understand how to catch a fish now and then *on their own account.* Their principal food, however, consists in shell-fish, which they find along the shores, with polypi, and such other animal substances as the sea leaves uncovered upon the beach after the tide has retired. A certain kind of sea-weed also furnishes them with an occasional meal, as it does their masters, — often as hungry and starving as themselves.

In his personal habits no human being is more filthy than the Fuegian. He never uses water for washing purposes; nor cleans the dirt from his skin in any way. He has no more idea of putting water to such use, than he has of drowning himself in it; and in respect to cleanliness, he is not only below most other savages, but below the brutes themselves: since even these are taught cleanliness by instinct. But no such instinct exists in the mind of the Fuegian; and he lives in the midst of filth. The smell of his body can be perceived at a considerable distance; and Hotspur's fop might have had reasonable grounds of complaint, had it been a Fuegian who came between the "wind and his no-

bility." To use the pithy language of one of the old navigators, "The Fuegian stinks like a fox."

Fairly examined, then, in all his bearings, — fairly judged by his habits and actions, — the Fuegian may claim the credit of being the most wretched of our race.

THE END.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